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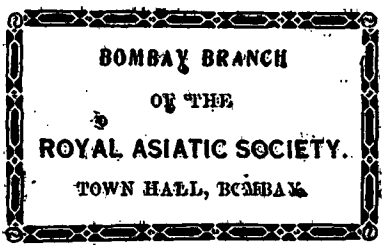

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MALTA: PAST AND PRESENT.

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BEING

A HISTORY OF MALTA FROM THE DAYS OF THE PHŒNICIANS TO THE PRESENT TIME.

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ac.

With a Map.

BY THE

REV. HENRY SEDDALL, B.A., T.C.D.,

VICAR OF DUNANY,

LATELY CHAPLAIN OF THE MILITARY SANATORIUM AT MALTA.

Ax. f. 22

LONDON:

CHAPMAN AND HALL, 193, PICCADILLY.

1870.

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PREFACE.

Mr. Anthony Trollope, in "The Bertrams," says, "Of Malta I should like to write a book, and may perhaps do so some day." If Mr. Trollope had favoured the public with a book on Malta, I should certainly not have presumed to write on the same subject; but as he has not done so, and perhaps may never do so, the public may, possibly, condescend to read what I have ventured to write about that interesting island and its inhabitants.

My long residence in Malta, my knowledge of the principal languages spoken on the island, and my intimate acquaintance with many of the native inhabitants, have enabled me to obtain the information necessary to the production of this book, which, with much diffidence, I offer to my readers. How I have availed myself of the information which fortunate circumstances placed within my reach, and how I have executed the task which I prescribed to myself, it is for those to say who will take the trouble to read what I have written.

I have aimed at accuracy and impartiality; and I have endeavoured to instruct rather than to amuse. For what I have said about the present condition of Malta I have relied on personal observation, and on the information collected from many sources during my residence on the island: for the past

history of Malta I have consulted every book within my reach which could throw any light on the subject. Amongst the works which have greatly aided me in my researches are the following: the works of Ciantar and Abela, native historians and antiquaries; Boisgelin, Vassallo, Vertot, Ransijat, Miège, and the Canon Panzavecchia; Lieut.-Col. Porter's "History of the Fortress of Malta;" the Report of the Commissioners, Sir G. C. Lewis and Mr. Austen; the *Malta Government Gazette*, the *Malta Times*, *Malta Observer*, and other newspapers, together with numerous pamphlets in Italian and English. For the information contained in Appendix X., entitled, "Notes on the Geology, Botany, and Natural History of Malta," I am indebted to my friend Mr. W. C. P. Medlycott, of Ven House, Sherborne, Fellow of the Zoological Society. From these and similar sources I have endeavoured to learn something about "Malta, Past and Present;" and to embody what I have myself learned in such a shape as to be, I trust, acceptable to the general reader, and not altogether useless to the student of history.

H. S.

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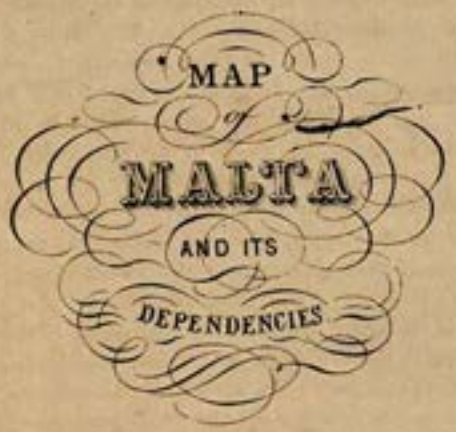
MAP
of
MALTA
AND ITS
DEPENDENCIES

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THE HISTORY OF MALTA.

CHAPTER I.

EARLY HISTORY OF MALTA.—B.C. 1400 TO A.D. 870.

MALTA is situated very near the 36th parallel of north latitude; its longitude is about 15° east; it is sixty miles distant from Cape Passaro in Sicily, 190 miles from Cape Spartivento in Italy, and about the same distance from Cape Bon in Africa. The greatest length of the island is twenty miles; its greatest breadth twelve miles; and its circumference sixty miles. Separated from it by a channel four miles wide to the north-west lies the island of Gozo; and between the two islands, nearly in the centre of the channel, is the island of Comino; the whole circumference of Malta, Gozo, and the intermediate island being about 100 miles. About three miles from Malta, on its southern side, is a rock called Filfla. All these islands are equally subject to the British Crown; the smaller islands being regarded as appendages to Malta. In official documents it is customary to use the form "Malta and its Dependencies." In the following historical outline I shall speak principally of Malta. Whenever the smaller islands are not specially mentioned the reader may take it for granted that what is recorded of Malta is true also of the smaller islands; and indeed it is impossible, on account of their geographical position, that the

three smaller islands should ever possess a political existence independent of that of Malta.

The political changes through which these islands have passed present to the student of history a most inviting subject of inquiry. If we look back to the remote past we find them inhabited successively by Phœnicians, Greeks, Carthaginians, Romans, Arabs, Normans, and Spaniards; and in later times we find them rising into importance as the stronghold of the renowned Order of St. John. Since the beginning of the present century they have formed part of the British Empire, and their history has, therefore, become completely identified with the history of our own country.

The early history of Malta is involved in obscurity. The ancient records of the island are full of fables similar to those which we read in the early history of Greece and Rome. A gigantic race of heroes is said to have possessed the island during the antediluvian ages; and after the Trojan war, Malta is said to have been the residence of the goddess Calypso, who received and entertained, as Fénélon tells us, Telemachus, the son of Ulysses. I need not, however, detain the reader by giving a detailed account of these fables, which are, after all, more amusing than profitable; but passing at once from the region of conjecture into that of history, I shall begin with the period of the Phœnicians—the first known possessors of Malta.

PHŒNICIANS.—Before Joshua conquered Palestine, the whole country from the extreme north to the very borders of Egypt was peopled by the Canaanites, the descendants of Ham. These were divided into eleven families, of which the most powerful was that of Canaan, the founder of Sidon and head of the Canaanites properly so called, whom the Greeks called Φοίνικοι (Phœnicians), from φοίνικος (scarlet, red, or purple), probably in allusion to the beautiful dye for which Tyre was famous. Straitened in their territories by the conquests of the

Israelites, and anxious to breathe the air of liberty, these enterprising Phœnicians began to look about them for other settlements. About the year B.C. 1450, they first began to undertake long voyages, and to engage in commercial speculations. They journeyed through Mesopotamia, Assyria, Persia, Arabia, and even ventured as far as India. They planted colonies on the shores of the Black Sea, in the islands of the Levant, in Sicily, Sardinia, and Spain. They also laid the foundation of Carthage, a city destined to play a great part in the history of the world; and as Malta offered great advantages to ships sailing between Carthage and the mother country, it was natural that the Phœnicians should be attracted to its shores, and should there establish a permanent settlement.

The few native Maltese who have written on the early history of their island have delighted to dwell on the glories of Malta in the days of the Phœnicians. Some of their statements are evidently tinged with a strong feeling of patriotism which has led them into very considerable exaggerations; but after making every reasonable deduction there is still good ground to conclude, from what they tell us, that Malta did really occupy a prominent place in the history of those remote ages. Several Punic inscriptions may be seen in the Public Library at Malta. The ruins of a Phœnician temple exist at Crendi, a few miles from Valletta; and the huge masses of stone which are known in Gozo as the Giant's Tower, are doubtless the remains of a temple in which Phœnician worshippers bowed down before the image of Baal. The caves at Bingemma, in the interior of the island, are also evidently excavations made by the Phœnicians. They are said greatly to resemble in their general appearance the sepulchral grottoes which exist in the neighbourhood of Tyre and Sidon. Coins, statues, and inscriptions of Phœnician origin have frequently been found in Malta. Many are preserved in the museums of the native gentry, and some in the Public Library. All these bear testimony to the fact that the

Phœnicians possessed the island; but there is no record of contemporary historians from which we can gain any information respecting the condition of the inhabitants of Malta under the Punic government.

GREEKS.—When Malta had been in the possession of the Phœnicians about seven hundred years, the island passed into the hands of the Greeks. This event is supposed to have occurred about the time that the Greek colony of Syracuse was founded by Archias of Corinth, B.C. 732. The government which the Greeks established was, like that of the other Greek colonies, formed on a Republican model. In the Royal Museum at Naples may be seen a Greek inscription which informs us how a certain Demetrius of Syracuse received the thanks of the Maltese people for the signal services which he had rendered to them. An accurate copy of this inscription may be seen in the learned work of Monsignor Bres, entitled "Malta Antica Illustrata" —Ancient Malta Illustrated. Greek inscriptions have been found in several places in the island. Greek temples are said by some of the Maltese native historians to have existed in various parts of the island. In Sicily we have at Segesta, Selinonte, and Girgenti, the remains of temples which even now, after the lapse of two thousand years, awe us by their grandeur. In Malta all traces of the idolatry of the ancient Greeks have disappeared.

CARTHAGINIANS.—Two hundred and fifty years after the Greeks landed in Malta, the Carthaginians, who were then just beginning their glorious career, added Malta and the neighbouring islands to their extensive dominions (B.C. 480). Whether they claimed Malta as property which had formerly belonged to their forefathers, the Phœnicians, or whether they claimed it only by right of conquest, we are unable to say. They obtained by force of arms Sicily, Sardinia, Corsica, the Balearic Islands, and Spain. It could not have been expected, therefore, that Malta should resist their power; and the Greeks, apparently

without a struggle, retired to make way for the brave descendants of Canaan.

About the year B.C. 264, the first of those eventful wars, known in Roman history as the Punic wars, broke out; and the Roman Consul, C. Duillius, gained the first naval victory over the Carthaginians. Three years after, Attilius Regulus gained another great victory, and moving towards Africa with his fleet in order to make a descent on the coast in the neighbourhood of Carthage, he came in sight of Malta, which, without having made any special preparation, he attacked and conquered. But the fortune of war is inconstant. The year following, the Carthaginians, under Xantippus, the Lacedæmonian general, became once more masters of the sea, and retook possession of Malta. Sixteen years passed away, and then C. Lutatius Catulus defeated the Carthaginians at sea, off the coast of Sicily, in the neighbourhood of the Egades; the three islands now called Favignana, Maretimo, and Levanso. Malta was, therefore, again claimed by the Romans, and was made over to them by treaty. Peace was of short duration. The Carthaginians wantonly violated the treaty and resumed their sway over Malta, as well as over all the other places which they had ceded. At last, in the year B.C. 240, the first Punic war was concluded after twenty-four years of almost incessant hostilities, and Malta remained in the hands of the Carthaginians.

The Carthaginians had made peace solely because they were unable to continue the war. But as soon as ever their forces were recruited and their exchequer replenished, they took the earliest opportunity of breaking the treaty which they had made with Rome. They besieged Saguntum, a city in alliance with Rome, and, when desired to desist, only prosecuted their operations with greater vigour. Ambassadors were sent in consequence from Rome to Carthage, who complained of the infraction of the articles, and required that Hannibal, the Carthaginian general at whose instigation Saguntum had been

attacked, should be delivered to them. The Carthaginian Senate indignantly refused to comply with this demand, and both sides prepared for the Second Punic war (B.C. 218).

Hannibal crossed first the Pyrenees, then the Alps, and entered the plains of Italy. At Trebia, Thrasymene, and Cannæ, this great general gained victories which have made his name immortal. The fate of Malta during this war is related by Livy in a few words. He says that* "the consul—Tiberius Sempronius—having dismissed Hiero with the royal fleet, and having left the prætor to defend the coast of Sicily, passed over himself from Lilybæum (now Marsala) to the island of Melita (Malta), which was held in possession by the Carthaginians. On his arrival, Hamilcar the son of Gisco, the commander of the garrison, delivered to him both the town and the island, together with the soldiers under his command, amounting to nearly two thousand; thence, after a few days, he returned to Lilybæum, and the prisoners taken both by the consul and by the prætor, excepting those illustrious for their rank, were publicly sold." After this the Carthaginians were never able to recover possession of the island. Their dominion over Malta lasted two hundred and sixty years, from B.C. 480 to B.C. 220.

ROMANS.—During the most brilliant period in the history of Rome, Malta had the distinguished honour of being reckoned among the possessions of the Great Republic. Her citizens enjoyed all the privileges granted to Roman citizens, and were governed by a proconsul, or, as some think, a proprætor, who was subject to the authority of the Prætor of Sicily.

Whilst the Romans governed Malta an event occurred which

* "A Lilybæo, consul, Hierone cum classe regiâ demisso relictoque prætore ad tuendam Siciliæ oram ipse in insulam Melitam quæ a Carthaginiensibus tenebatur trajecit: advenienti Hamilcar Gisconis filius præfectus præsidii cum paulo minus duobus millibus militum oppidumque cum insula traditur. Inde post paucos dies reditum Lilybæum, captivique et a consule et a prætore præter insignes nobilitate viros sub coronâ venierunt."—Liv., lib. xxi. c. 51.

has rendered the island almost sacred in the eyes of those who look with interest on the places where the great scenes described in the Bible took place. The great Apostle of the Gentiles, on his way from Jerusalem to Rome, was shipwrecked at an island called Melita, which there can be no doubt is identical with Malta. I am well aware that on this subject opinions are divided. Many persons, to whose judgment some deference is due, maintain that the Apostle was wrecked at the island of Meleda, in the northern portion of the Adriatic.* A careful examination of both sides of this interesting question leads, I think, to the conclusion that the weight of evidence is entirely in favour of Malta; and if it be admitted that St. Paul was wrecked in Malta, there is but one place on the island where the scene could have occurred, and that is the place which local tradition has always pointed out, and which has for ages been known as St. Paul's Bay.

The arguments in favour of Meleda are concisely and accurately summed up by the learned Dr. Hales in his "Chronology;" and, in order that the reader may hear both sides, I will first quote Dr. Hales on this subject, and then examine his arguments with a view to test their force.

"The course of this voyage," says Dr. Hales, "related Acts xxvii., in which the Apostle was shipwrecked on the island of Melita (Acts xxviii. 1), has been much mistaken by the first

* "On sait bien aujourd'hui à ne plus en douter que c'est l'île de Meleda dans la Mer Adriatique, sur la côte de la Dalmatie, et qui faisait autrefois partie de la république de Raguse où St. Paul fit naufrage."—*Corresp. de Bar. Zach.*, ix. 78.

"The supposition (that Malta was the scene of St. Paul's shipwreck) is quite absurd. Not to argue the matter at length, consider these few conclusive facts. The narrative speaks of the barbarous people and barbarians of the island; now our Malta was at the time fully peopled and highly civilised, as we may surely infer from ancient and other writings. A viper comes out of the sticks upon the fire being lighted; the men are not surprised at the appearance of the snake, but imagine first a murderer and then a god from the harmless attack. Now in our Malta there are, I may say, no snakes at all."—Coleridge's "Table Talk," p. 185.

"This (Malta) is not the Melita where St. Paul was shipwrecked."—Lord Lindsay's "Letters from Egypt and the Holy Land," i. 19.

geographers and commentators, and their maps of it erroneously constructed, in consequence of the vulgar error that the island in question was the African Meleda, or Malta, instead of the Adriatic Melita, or Meleda. This correction of the received geography we owe to the sagacious Bryant; and it has recently been established with much learning and ability by a layman in a Dissertation on this voyage, Oxford, 1817, the ingenious Dr. Falconer, the physician at Bath, who has also furnished a more correct map of the voyage."

* * * * * * *

"When they had reached the shore in safety they found that the island on which they were cast was named Melita. That this island was Meleda, near the Illyrian coast, not Malta, on the southern coast of Sicily, may appear from the following considerations:—

"1. It lies confessedly in the Adriatic Sea, but Malta a considerable distance from it.

"2. It lies nearer the mouth of the Adriatic than any other island of that sea; and would, of course, be more likely to receive the wreck of any vessel driven by tempests towards that quarter; and it lies north-west by north of the south-west promontory of Crete, and came nearly in the direction of a storm from the south-east quarter.

"3. An obscure island, called Melita, whose inhabitants were 'barbarous,' was not applicable to the celebrity of Malta at that time, which Cicero represents as abounding in curiosities and riches, and possessing a remarkable manufacture of the finest linen. (Orat. in Verrem, iv. sec. 18, 46.)

"And Diodorus Siculus more fully: 'Malta is furnished with many and very good harbours, and the inhabitants are very rich; for it is full of all sorts of artificers, among whom are excellent weavers of fine linen. Their houses are very stately and beautiful, adorned with graceful eaves, and pargetted with white plaster. The inhabitants are a colony of

Phœnicians, who, trading as merchants as far as the western ocean, resorted to this place on account of its commodious ports and convenient situation for maritime commerce; and by the advantage of this place the inhabitants frequently became famous both for their wealth and their merchandise.' (Diodor., lib. v. c. 1.)

"4. The circumstance of the viper, or venomous snake, which fastened on St. Paul's hand, agrees with the damp and woody island of Meleda, affording shelter and proper nourishment for such, but not with the dry and rocky island of Malta, in which there are no serpents now, and none in the time of Pliny.

"5. The disease with which the father of Publius was affected, dysentery combined with fever, probably intermittent, might well suit a country woody and damp, and probably, for want of draining, exposed to the putrid effluvia of confined moisture, but was not likely to affect a dry, rocky, and remarkably healthy island like Malta.

"After a stay of three months they departed, probably about the beginning of March, in a ship of Alexandria, which had also wintered in the isle, and perhaps from similar stress of weather, and came from thence to Syracuse, where they spent three days, and thence proceeded to Rhegium, on the Straits of Messina; and after a day's stay there, reached Puteoli in two days, which was the usual port at which the corn ships from Egypt landed their cargoes. Here also Josephus and his shipwrecked companions landed after they were taken up by a Cyrenian vessel, the year after St. Paul's voyage." *

Let us see now what may be said in reply to these statements, and in favour of the assertion that Malta was the scene of St. Paul's shipwreck.

1. The force of the first objection rests on the use of the word "Adria" in Acts xxvii. 27:—"We were driven up and down in Adria." Now it is well known to scholars that the

* Hales' "Chronology," vol. i. p. 468. Second edition, 1830.

whole of the sea between Greece, Italy, and Africa was frequently called by the ancients Adria, or Hadria. Strictly speaking, only the northern part of the sea was called Mare Adriaticum, whilst the southern portion of it was called Mare Ionium; but, speaking popularly, a large portion of the Mare Ionium was included in the name Adria; just as in the present day we seldom make any distinction between the Irish Sea and St. George's Channel, but include the whole of the sea between England and Ireland under the former name. St. Luke might, therefore, with perfect propriety, say, "We were driven up and down in Adria," meaning by this term that portion of the Mediterranean which lies to the west of Greece, and to the south-east of Italy. Hesychius, who lived in the third century, expressly says that in his time the Ionian Sea was called Adria—"Ionium mare quod nunc Adria." And Procopius, who was secretary to the great general, Belisarius, A.D. 534, says that Malta and Gozo formed the boundary between the Tuscan and Adriatic seas—"Insulæ Gaulus et Melita, Adriaticum et Tuscum pelagus disterminant." The objection, therefore, founded on the use of the word Adria cannot be allowed to have much weight.

2. The second objection is based on an assumption, viz., that the Euroclydon is the south-east wind. Euroclydon, however, signifies a violent tempestuous wind blowing from the eastern quarter (*Eurus*, east), but not necessarily from the south-east. A violent gale from the *north-east* might properly be termed Euroclydon,* and a north-east wind would have driven St. Paul's ship towards Malta. Every one who has lived in Malta knows how terrible the north-east wind (called by sailors the "gregale") is to shipping, and how it tears up the coast, destroying all before it whilst it lasts. The sacred historian, by

* Mr. Smith, of Jordanhill, supposes the Euroclydon to be the E.N.E. wind. "Euroclydon," he says, "is compounded of Eurus and Aquilo; Eurus meaning East, and Aquilo north-east. Hence E.N.E."

using the word Euroclydon, does not determine whether the wind blew from the north or from the south. There is, therefore, at least as good reason for believing it to have been the north-east as the south-east. On further inquiry, however, we shall find that there is much better reason for believing the Euroclydon to have been the north-east wind than the south-east. In Acts xxvii. 13, 14, we read: "When the south wind blew softly, supposing that they had obtained their purpose, loosing thence, they sailed close by Crete. But not long after this there arose against it (evidently against the ship) a tempestuous wind, called Euroclydon." Now a north-east wind would have been directly against the ship, and, consequently, would have driven her out of her course, whereas a south-east wind would have been favourable, and could not have been mentioned as blowing *against* the ship. Again (Acts xxvii. 27), "When the fourteenth night was come, as we were driven up and down in Adria, about midnight the shipmen deemed that they drew near to some country." It appears, then, that for fourteen days St. Paul and his companions had been driven before a tempestuous wind, and had seen no land. It must occur to any one who looks at the map of Europe that if they had all this time been approaching Meleda they would have passed close to the Morea and the Ionian Islands, and it is scarcely possible that they should not have seen land somewhere in that direction. Although "neither sun nor stars in many days appeared," yet the quarter of the heavens in which the sun rose might have been ascertained, and thus the direction of the wind might have been known; and naturally enough, if they had known that they were being driven before the south-east wind, they would have looked for land in the direction of Greece; but knowing that the ship was being urged forward before a powerful gregale, or north-east wind, they appear not to have looked for land. Under the circumstances in which they were placed, if the supposition that the wind blew from the north-

east be correct, they would have been drifted in the direction of Malta, and would have had no chance of seeing any land during the storm.

3. The use of the term "barbarian" in St. Luke's narrative has misled many who are unable to look beyond the English version of the Scriptures; but it is very remarkable that it should have misled so distinguished a scholar as Dr. Hales. It is a well-known fact that the Greeks used the word barbarian to signify *foreigner*, one belonging to another country, one not a Greek. Thus in Xenophon's "Anabasis" the Persians, at that time a highly-civilised people, are always called barbarians. Thus St. Paul, in 1 Cor. xiv. 11, says, "If I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be unto him that speaketh a barbarian." Herodotus tells us that the Egyptians call those barbarians who do not speak the same language as themselves;* and even Ovid, although a Latin poet, in imitation probably of the Greeks and Egyptians, says, "Barbarus hic ego sum quia non intelligor ulli." It was, therefore, quite proper in St. Luke to call the

* Πελειάδες δέ μοι δοκέουσι κληθῆναι πρὸς Δωδωναίων ἐπὶ τοῦδε αἱ γυναῖκες, διότι βάρβαροι ἦσαν· ἐδόκεον δέ σφι ὁμοίως ὄρνισι φθέγγεσθαι.

"The women were called doves by the Dodonians, it appears to me, because they were barbarians"—that is, because they were unable to understand their language—"they thought that the sounds they uttered resembled those of birds." (Herod., lib. ii. c. 57.)

Νεκὼς μὲν νυν μεταξὺ ὀρύσσων ἐπάυσατο μαντήιον ἐμποδίον γενομένου τοιοῦδε· τῷ βαρβάρῳ αὐτὸν προεργάζεσθαι· βαρβάρους δὲ παντάς οἱ Αἰγύπτιοι καλέουσι τοὺς μὴ σφίσι ὁμογλώσσους.

"He at length desisted from his undertaking, being admonished by an oracle that all his labour would turn to the advantage of a barbarian; and it is to be observed that the Egyptians term all barbarians who speak a language different from their own." (Herod., lib. ii. c. 158.)

Ὑπὸ συμφορῶν δὲ πολλαῖς γενεαῖς ὕστερον πιεγόμενοι Ἀμπρακίοτας ὁμόρους ὄντας, τῇ Ἀμφιλοχικῇ, συνόικους ἐπήγαγοντο· καὶ ἑλληνίσθησαν τὴν νυν γλῶσσαν τότε πρῶτον ἀπὸ τῶν Ἀμπρακιωτῶν συνοικήσαντων· οἱ δὲ ἄλλοι Ἀμφιλοκοὶ βαρβαροί εἰσιν.

"Many generations afterwards, being pressed by misfortunes, they called in the Ambraciots, who bordered on Amphilochia, as joint-inhabitants; and from the Ambraciots who joined them they learned the Greek language, which they now speak, the rest of the Ambraciots being *barbarians*"—*i.e.*, ignorant of the Greek language. (Thucydides, lib. ii. c. 68.)

natives of Malta βαρβαροι, because they were foreigners in regard to him; but if the shipwreck had taken place at Meleda the term would have been improper, for the inhabitants of Meleda spoke the Greek language.

4. The fourth objection is that vipers are never found on the dry rocks of Malta, but are frequently seen in the damp and wooded islands of the Adriatic. It seems, by the objectors, to be taken for granted that the viper which fastened on St. Paul's hand was found on the island, and that vipers were common there; whereas it is more than probable that the reptile had been conveyed to the island in the ship. Mediterranean sailors generally carry with them on board of their ships bundles of wood to serve as fuel during the voyage. Within these bundles reptiles sometimes conceal themselves, and during the winter they are, of course, in a torpid state. We have only to suppose that the bundle of sticks which St. Paul gathered had been washed on shore from his own ship; and as the ship had sailed from a country in which venomous reptiles abound, the existence of a viper within the bundle is not to be wondered at. This viper had been torpid during the voyage, and was only roused by the heat of the fire. This appears to me a satisfactory way of accounting for the existence of the reptile. It is not necessary to assume that the scene of the shipwreck must have been a damp island abounding in forests.*

5. The fifth objection is, that the disease from which the father of Publius was suffering is one which generally prevails in damp localities, but which is not generally prevalent in a dry rocky island like Malta. In answer to this objection it may be said that the existence of one case of dysentery by no

* Mr. Smith, of Jordanhill, says, "Upon this point I would merely observe that no person who has studied the changes which the operations of man have produced on the Fauna (animals) of any country will be surprised that a particular species of reptiles should have disappeared from Malta." He then mentions that the Rev. Dr. Lanesborough, in his interesting excursions in Arran, has repeatedly noticed the gradual disappearance of the viper from that island since it has become more frequented."

means proves the disease to have been prevalent; and this answer would meet the objection completely. But all who have lived in Malta know that after the autumn rains the very disease with which the father of Publius was affected is very common. The natives are generally exempt from it, but the English and other European residents often suffer during the autumn from fever, accompanied in many cases with dysentery. The father of Publius was not a native of the island, but probably a citizen of the imperial city of Rome. He was, therefore, not inured to the climate, and he suffered just as English residents in Malta do at the present time during the first year or two of their sojourn on the island.

If these answers to the objections enumerated by Dr. Hales be considered unsatisfactory, I would refer the reader to the account given by St. Luke of the Apostle's voyage after his departure from the scene of the shipwreck. The narrative says (Acts xxviii. 11—13), "After three months we departed in a ship of Alexandria, which had wintered in the isle, whose sign was Castor and Pollux, and landing at Syracuse, we tarried there three days. And from thence we fetched a compass and came to Rhegium: and after one day the south wind blew, and we came the next day to Puteoli." Now any one who examines this narrative impartially must see that this would be the natural course of a traveller going from Malta to Rome; but no one going from Meleda to Rome would think of sailing down the Adriatic and round to Syracuse and Rhegium. I have myself sailed in a small schooner along the track described above by St. Luke, and can therefore realise the truth of the sacred narrative. From Malta to Syracuse the passage was made in a few hours with a southerly wind; from Syracuse to Rhegium it became necessary to "fetch a compass," that is, to make a long tack and beat up against the wind, in consequence of the strong northerly breeze which generally blows down the Straits of Messina. That a strong northerly wind was actually blowing

down the straits at the time that St. Paul was sailing from Syracuse to Rhegium, we infer from the circumstance that the historian thinks it necessary to mention the change of wind. "After one day," he says, "the south wind blew." Particular stress is laid on the direction of the wind, as if to intimate that a contrary wind had been blowing before; and this is just what a Mediterranean sailor, beating up the Straits of Messina, would anxiously look for, a southerly wind to carry him through the straits, and beyond the reach of Scylla and Charybdis.

Add to all this that in Malta a tradition has existed from time immemorial that St. Paul was wrecked there. The very place where the ship struck—the τόπον διθάλασσον, or place where two seas met—is pointed out to the traveller at St. Paul's Bay, between the small island of Selmoon and the mainland of Malta. Publius is said, moreover, to have been converted to Christianity by the preaching of St. Paul, and to have become the first bishop of the island. A church dedicated to his memory may be seen at Floriana, just outside the walls of Valletta. When oral tradition comes in aid of written history it is not to be disparaged. There must be some foundation for the tradition. So far as I have been able to ascertain, no tradition exists, or ever has existed, at Meleda in connection with St. Paul's shipwreck; whereas the Maltese have ever regarded it as one of their greatest privileges that St. Paul laid amongst them the foundation of a Christian Church. The Christian religion has been professed by the natives of Malta ever since the days of the Apostle; and in Malta we have a remarkable instance of a whole population speaking the language of Arabia, and yet believing in the divine mission of Jesus Christ. The language of the Maltese is Arabic, differing in some respects from the Arabic spoken in the north of Africa and throughout the Levant; but, nevertheless, undoubtedly Arabic. We might, therefore, expect to find the Maltese devout Moham-

medans; but, to our great surprise, we find them, without exception, Christians. There can be no doubt that what history and tradition both assert is true, that the Gospel was first preached in Malta by the distinguished Apostle of the Gentiles.*

* The reader who wishes to obtain further information on this interesting subject ought to read the able and exhaustive book entitled "The Voyage and Shipwreck of St. Paul," by J. Smith, Esq., of Jordanhill, F.R.S., &c.

I have only room here for the following extract, which may serve to confirm what I have said above:—

"On the fourteenth night of their being driven through the Sea of Adria, towards midnight the seamen suspected that land was near. St. Luke does not tell us what the indications were, and the only conjecture I have seen is that of Calmet, that they became aware of it by the sense of smell. He says, 'Ils soupçonnèrent l'approche de la terre non par la vue, parceque c'était à minuit et qu'ils étaient dans des profondes ténèbres, mais apparemment par l'odeur de la terre, ou par la fraîcheur, ou par le vent.' But all these conjectures require off-shore winds. A storm on the face of a lee shore is not the time when

> 'Gentle gales,
> Fanning their odoriferous wings, dispense
> Native perfumes, and whisper whence they stole
> Their balmy spoils.'

"The only other conjecture is that they saw or heard *the breakers on a rocky coast.*

"Such are the usual premonitory warnings to ships unexpectedly falling in with the land at night.

"If we assume that St. Paul's Bay, in Malta, is the actual scene of the shipwreck, we can have no difficulty in explaining what these indications must have been. No ship can enter it from the east without passing within a quarter of a mile from the point of Koura; but before reaching it the land is too low and too far from the track of a ship driven from the eastward to be seen in a dark night. When she does come within this distance it is impossible to avoid observing the breakers; for with the north-easterly gales the sea breaks upon it with such violence that Admiral Smyth, in his view of the headland, has made the breakers its distinctive character." Mr. Smith then relates the circumstances connected with the wreck of the *Lively* frigate, which are in several respects similar to those under which St. Paul's ship was wrecked. He continues, "I have already shown from these independent sources that the wind must have been E.N.E. ¼ N. to the nearest quarter of a point, and that the ship must have been on the starboard tack, that is, with her head to the north, in order to avoid the Syrtis. The first question which presents itself is, *What was the direction of the drift mentioned in the seventeenth verse*—'so were driven?' The answer depends on the angle the ship's head makes with the wind and the lee-way. But an ancient ship could probably not lie nearer to the wind than seven points, which, added to six points of lee-way, makes thirteen points as the angle which such a ship would probably make with the wind. E.N.E. ¼ N. is 2¼ points to the north of east; if we add

The remainder of the history of Malta under the Romans may be told in a few words. After St. Paul's shipwreck and the foundation of a Christian Church in Malta, the island remained in the possession of the Romans, but its importance appears to have diminished rapidly.

In A.D. 337 the empire was divided amongst the three sons of Constantine the Great—viz., Constantine, Constantius, and Constans. Malta was assigned to Constans, to whom Italy, Illyria, and Africa were given as his share of the imperial dominions.

Three years after this arrangement had been made, Constantine fell in a battle against his brother Constans; and ten years after the death of Constantine, Constans was murdered by order of Magnentius. Constantius alone remained, and he re-united the empire and governed as sole ruler. In the year 361 he died, and was succeeded by Julian the Apostate. The

thirteen to this it makes the azimuth of the ship's course from Clauda W. ¾ N., or W. 8° N., *which is the bearing of Malta to the nearest degree.*

"The next point to be ascertained is, *How far would she have driven from Clauda about midnight, when the fourteenth night was come?* The knowledge of this depends on the rate of drift and the time consumed. In order to ascertain what might be supposed to be the mean rate of drift of a ship circumstanced as St. Paul's was, I consulted two nautical friends, both of them at the time commanding ships in Valletta harbour, and both of them familiar with the navigation of the Levant. To the first of these officers, Capt. W. McLean, R.N., I put the question, 'What would you say would be the probable rate of drift of a ship hove to in a gale of wind?' His answer was, 'That depends on the force of the gale and the size of the ship.' Upon explaining that I considered it a large ship even as compared with modern merchantmen, and that the gale might be reckoned one of mean intensity, he said, after considering the matter, that 'speaking in round numbers, forty miles in twenty-four hours might be reckoned a fair allowance.' I put the same question to Capt. Graves, R.N., who replied, 'From three-quarters of a mile to two miles an hour.' The mean of these extremes is thirty-three miles in twenty-four hours, and the mean of both estimates is thirty-six and a half miles in twenty-four hours. I now come to the time elapsed. It is quite clear that St. Luke counts the time from the day the ship left the Fair Havens. We hear of 'the third day' (v. 19), the preceding is termed the 'next day,' which brings us to the first day both of the gale and the voyage. It is also clear that the events of that day must have occupied a large portion of it. The time consumed in driving through the Sea of Adria, from the time they left the island of Clauda till they became aware of the vicinity of land at midnight of the fourteenth day, is therefore thirteen days complete, and a small fraction. But the distance from Clauda to the point of Koura, where I suppose this happened,

empire continued united for thirty-four years, until the death of Theodosius the Great. At the death of Theodosius the empire was again divided between his sons, Honorius and Arcadius. Honorius reigned in the West and Arcadius in the East.

The dominions of Arcadius comprised the whole of Greece, Egypt, the provinces of Western Asia, and the islands of the Mediterranean. Malta, therefore, from this time formed part of the Eastern Roman, or, as it was afterwards called, the Byzantine Empire. No events of any importance appear to have taken place in Malta during a period of about five hundred years. The wild hordes who made incursions into every part of the empire, and laid the foundation of the modern nations of Europe, appear to have passed by Malta as unworthy of notice. No record exists of any attack on the island during this long period; no traces of Goth or Vandal dominion are anywhere to be found. The inhabitants were probably few, and were suffered to live unmolested, no more notice being taken of them than is now taken of the inhabitants of Pantellaria or Lampedusa by the rest of Europe.

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is 476·6 miles, which, at the rate as deduced from the information of Captains McLean and Graves, would take exactly thirteen days one hour and twenty minutes.

"The coincidence of the *actual bearing* of St. Paul's Bay from Clauda, and the direction in which a ship must have driven in order to avoid the Syrtis, is, if possible, still more striking than that of the time actually consumed and the calculated time.

"The direction of the ship's course is inferred from that of the wind, from the angle of the ship's head with the wind, and from the lee-way. I have shown that the mean direction of the wind, as deduced from the notices in the narrative, was E. 26° 15′ N. I have assigned reasons for supposing seven points as the angle an ancient ship's head would make with the wind, which, added to six points for lee-way, makes an angle of 146° 15′, which, added to the angle of the wind, makes the azimuth of the ship's course, as drawn from these data, E. 172° 30′ N., or 82° 30′ W., which agrees with the bearing of St. Paul's Bay, 82° 17′, as drawn from the following calculation (1) to 13′, which, at the distance between Clauda and Malta, is equivalent to two and a half miles.

"Hence, according to these calculations, a ship startling late in the evening from Clauda would by midnight on the fourteenth day be *less than three miles from the entrance to St. Paul's Bay.*"

(1) N.B. The calculation alluded to above will be found in the Appendix.

CHAPTER II.

HISTORY OF MALTA UNDER THE ARABS AND SICULO-NORMANS. 870—1194.

ARABS.—Arabia, the country of Mohammed, has at all times been an object of curiosity to the student of history and to the intelligent observer of men and manners. Situated partly under the burning sun of the tropics, and covered almost entirely with arid, naked mountains and deserts, it possesses few of those natural advantages which allure the traveller to other countries. And yet it is not without its attractions. The contrast between Arabia and the civilised countries of Europe and Asia is so great that the traveller may well imagine himself to be in a new world. The author of "Forty Days in the Desert" thus describes his sensations at the first view of this remarkable country:—"There is a terrible and triumphant power of the sun upon this wide region of sterility and death, like that of a despot over a realm blighted by his destructive sway; no trace of verdure is there but the stunted shrub, which straggles at wide intervals about the sandy bed of some dried water-course, no sign of living thing but the burrow of the rat, the slimy trail of the serpent, or the carcass of the camel, who makes his grave, as well as his home, in the wilderness. There is a rapture in pacing alone among the drifted sand-heaps till night has fallen upon the wilderness, over which millions of stars, rising up resplendently from the very edge of the vast horizon, seem quietly brooding. One may hear, as it were, the solemn pulsation of the universe."

One part of Arabia possesses some natural scenery. The hills in the neighbourhood of the Red Sea are less barren than those in the interior. The springs of water are there more numerous, and the air is cooled by the breezes from the sea. When compared with the parched and sandy deserts by which it is surrounded, it may appear to be an earthly paradise, and it has, accordingly, earned the name of Happy Arabia. But even Happy Arabia cannot boast of navigable rivers or timber-producing forests. It has few springs of drinkable water, and no commodities but coffee and frankincense to exchange for the productions of other countries. The inhabitants of this parched and sterile region are divided into two great classes—the dwellers in tents and the dwellers in cities. Before the appearance of Mohammed the religion of the Arabs was undefined. Some of the tribes had adopted a creed which may be described as pure theism; others professed a religion which was a mixture of Judaism and Christianity. Mohammed, a man of marvellous genius and enthusiasm, effected a great revolution. The wandering and insignificant tribes of Arabia were, by the magic influence of the religion which he taught, formed into a powerful nation, and sent forth to be the conquerors of the greater part of Asia, of all the civilised countries of Africa, and of some of the most powerful kingdoms of Europe. In a few years these enthusiastic warriors spread their conquests and their faith from the Ganges to the Danube. Burning with intense hatred to the Christian name, and inflamed with a desire to obtain the mastery over the whole of Christendom, they poured in vast numbers through Syria, Palestine, and Northern Africa; and in their victorious progress along the shores of the Mediterranean they took possession of the island of Malta.

During the reign of the Emperor Basil I., surnamed the Macedonian (A.D. 870), the Arabs made a descent on Gozo, massacred a large number of the inhabitants, and took

possession of the island. Thence they crossed to Malta, which offered some resistance, but was obliged to yield to the superior skill and strength of the Mohammedan invaders. The lives and property of the natives were spared, but the Greek settlers on the island were put to death without mercy, their wives and children sold into slavery, and their goods divided amongst the Arab chiefs. The authority of the Byzantine emperor was declared to be at an end, and the government of the island was assumed by an Arab Emir.

Of the government of Malta by the Arabs few details have reached us, and those few are by no means well authenticated. It is a question how far the profession of the Christian religion was permitted in Malta by the Arabs. Some authors tell us that full toleration was proclaimed, and that the religion of Mohammed was not forced on the Maltese; but this we know was not consistent with the practice of the Arabs in the other countries which fell beneath their sword. Besides, if no oppression in the matter of religion had been exercised in Malta by the Arabs, we shall find it hard to account for the excessive joy manifested by the Maltese at the overthrow of their power by Count Roger, the Norman. Other authors tell us, what I am much more disposed to believe, that horrible tortures were inflicted by them on such of the native Maltese as remained steadfast in their profession of the Christian faith. All who have studied the history of the Arabs, and the rise and progress of Mohammedanism, must be aware that toleration formed no part of the Mohammedan creed. It is more than probable that under the Arabs the Maltese were subject to many indignities, and were always in danger of suffering for their religious opinions; and, when we remember that their bondage lasted for more than two centuries, we may fairly say that they deserve the highest credit for their patient endurance, and for the desperate tenacity with which they clung to the creed of their ancestors. One thing is certain, that neither the

hope of pleasing their conquerors, nor the fear of death, ever caused any considerable number of Maltese to embrace Mohammedanism. For two hundred and twenty years the Maltese maintained their allegiance to the Cross, amidst many temptations to apostatise; and he who can see the finger of Providence in the events of history may deem it not a little remarkable that, five centuries later, Malta should have become, in the hands of the Knights Hospitallers, the principal barrier against the encroachments of the Arabs in Western Europe.

On the arrival of the Arabs in Malta, many of the inhabitants of Greek origin took refuge in Constantinople; those who remained were reduced to slavery, or, at least, to a condition in which they were little better than slaves. In order to guard against insurrection on the part of the natives, as well as to resist all attacks on the island from the seaboard, the Arabs built a castle on the promontory which commands the entrances of the two harbours, on the site where the fortress of St. Elmo now stands. This was the first of those splendid fortifications which have rendered Malta celebrated throughout the civilised world. They also erected defences around the principal town, which, for security, was situated in the centre of the island. They called the town *Medina*, which, in Arabic, signifies "capital city," and by this name it is still known to the natives, although amongst the English residents it is better known by its more modern Italian name, *Città Vecchia*, a name given to it after Valletta was built. Medals, coins, and inscriptions exist in Malta as memorials of the dominion of the Arabs, but few written records are extant to throw light on the condition of the people during this period. The most durable, and at the same time the most interesting, monument which the Arabs left in Malta is their language, which is still, after the lapse of a thousand years, spoken, although rarely read, and still more rarely written by the Maltese.

Sicilo-Normans.—During the occupation of Malta by the

Arabs, the Byzantine emperors made several unsuccessful attempts to recapture the island. In the reign of Nicephorus Phocas, and again in the reign of Michael IV., surnamed the Paphlagonian, expeditions were fitted out in order to expel the Arabs, who had become very troublesome neighbours on account of their violence, and the encouragement they gave to piratical excursions. Every attempt, however, failed. The Arabs held their position firmly, and the admirals of the great Eastern emperors were compelled to retire before the enthusiastic sons of the desert. What the Byzantine emperors, however, could not do, was done by a gallant knight, at the head of troops whose valour had made them renowned throughout Europe.

Count Roger, the son of Tancred de Hauteville, a gentleman of Lower Normandy, had inherited from his ancestors a spirit of adventure and military talent of the highest order. Roger had already gained great renown both as a warrior and a statesman, when, aided by his brothers, he expelled the Arabs from various parts of Sicily. The Norman possessions in Sicily belonged to Robert Guiscard, the elder brother of Count Roger. On the death of Robert they fell to Roger, who, continuing the work which his brother had commenced, waged war against the Arabs until he had taken from them nearly every inch of ground which they had held in Sicily. Then, unsatisfied with his conquests, he turned his attention to Malta, which was gradually becoming more and more the stronghold of the infidels, as the Arabs were called in those days by the common consent of Christendom. Entrusting the government of his Sicilian territories to one of his sons, the veteran soldier put himself at the head of an expedition designed to drive the Arabs back to the East, whence they came. In the summer of the year 1090 he landed on the coast of Malta, taking the Arabs, it would appear, completely by surprise. The natives had received notice of his approach, and, longing to free

themselves from the despotism of their Mohammedan rulers, they gladly welcomed Count Roger as their deliverer. Not more joyfully did the Protestants of Ireland welcome the arrival of William III. in 1690, than the Maltese welcomed on this occasion Count Roger, a Christian prince whose whole life had been spent in fighting against the enemies of their faith, and from whom they might reasonably expect the complete discomfiture of the Arabs and the re-establishment of the Christian religion. Without losing a moment, the valiant Count marched to Medina and laid siege to it. Evidently the Arabs had not been prepared for so sudden an attack; their means of defence were limited, no assistance was to be expected from any quarter; they were cut off from all communication with Sicily, and with their countrymen in other parts of the Mediterranean; the native population was hostile to them, and the Christian slaves, who were very numerous, longed to burst their bonds. The Count's troops, on the other hand, were brave, experienced, and flushed with their recent victories over the Arabs in Sicily. It was resolved, therefore, by the Arab chiefs that the garrison of Medina should surrender at discretion, and thus avoid the general massacre that would assuredly have ensued if the city had been taken by storm. A conference was held in the Count's tent, and the following conditions were proposed by the Normans and assented to by the Arabs. The Emir was to give up the island immediately to the Normans; he was to supply a certain number of horses and mules, and a specified quantity of the munitions of war; and he was to grant freedom to all Christian slaves. The Count, on his part, promised to allow the Emir to depart peaceably from Malta, taking with him all his personal property. Those of his countrymen who wished to follow his fortunes were to be allowed to depart with him, whilst those who preferred to remain in Malta were to be permitted to do so on condition that they paid, in token of submission, a small annual tribute. The same conditions were

imposed upon the inhabitants in Gozo. No one who knows what barbarities were generally committed in war during those dark ages can doubt that Count Roger behaved with wonderful magnanimity under the circumstances in which he was placed. The Arabs were completely in his power, and, instead of taking advantage of their helpless situation as a less generous warrior would have done, he entered into negotiations with them in the most liberal spirit, and granted them conditions such as are seldom conceded, except to those who are still in a position to make some resistance. The Emir retired to Barbary, and many of the Arabs followed his example. A few remained on the island under the protection of Count Roger, and bound themselves to pay the tribute imposed upon them by their conquerors.

As soon as the Emir and his followers had retired, Count Roger was proclaimed by universal consent ruler of the island of Malta and its dependencies. The joy of the people knew no bounds. A Christian prince now reigned over them. The infidels were no longer their masters. The Cross was once more uplifted. The name of their great patron saint was again openly invoked. The churches, which had long lain in ruins, were restored. Anthems and *Te Deums* were again sung; and Christian pastors once more tended their flocks in security. During the period that the Arabs held the island there had been no resident Christian bishop. At the time of their invasion, Manas, Bishop of Malta, a Greek by birth, was carried over to Sicily, and there put to death with great cruelty. From that time until the conquest of the island by Count Roger no bishop was permitted to reside on the island; a sufficient proof, if proof be needed, that the Arabs were not so tolerant as they are by some writers represented to have been. The Count not only rebuilt and endowed the cathedral church at Medina, but selected a pious ecclesiastic named Gualtieri (Walter), and sent him to Rome to be consecrated by Urban II. The episcopal

revenues, which had been confiscated by the Arabs, were restored, and in addition to these, certain lands at Lentini, in Sicily, were granted to the new bishop, to enable him to live in a manner conformable to his rank. In the sacristy of the cathedral church at Medina the traveller may see a very fine portrait of Count Roger, at the foot of which is a Latin inscription, which describes him as the conqueror of the island and the founder of the cathedral.

The Christian religion having been re-established in Malta, and provision having been made for the support of a bishop and an adequate number of clergy, Count Roger turned his attention to secular affairs. New laws were framed. The government, which under the Arabs had been tyrannical in the extreme, was conducted by the Norman chief on liberal principles verging on democracy. Christopher d'Avalos, in his work entitled "Tableau Historique de Malte," says on this subject:—"Roger, after having liberated these islands from the yoke of the Arabs and secured their independence, the first right and chief good of every people, like a wise legislator, considered that if he wished to preserve to his family the crown which his victories and the gratitude of the people had placed upon his head, it was necessary that he should establish a government founded on justice, that he should observe the relations which invariably exist between the several orders of the state, being persuaded that such a government alone can reconcile the rights of the sovereign with the interests of his subjects, and become not less favourable to the splendour and stability of the throne than to the preservation of the essential rights of human society. Without being compelled by force of arms, or driven to it by adverse circumstances, as was John Lackland when the English barons extorted from him Magna Charta, he of his own accord, limited the royal prerogative, and established, with the consent of the various orders of the state, a constitution which created a representative body charged with

the formation of laws, the taxation of the people, and the preservation of social order."*

For the defence of the island, the Count placed troops in the three principal military stations. Medina, the capital city, was, of course, strongly garrisoned, and the rest of the soldiers were divided between the new castle, on the site of the fortress now called St. Elmo, and the castle now known as Fort St. Angelo. The commander-in-chief of the troops did not administer the civil government of the island, but confined himself to the discharge of his military duties.

Having thus placed the island in a state of security, and granted to the inhabitants constitutional liberty, the brave and noble Count appointed a deputy to govern in his name, and then returned to his possessions in Sicily. He continued to govern his States for eleven years longer, and in the year 1101 he died at Mileto, in Calabria, leaving behind him a reputation for valour and wisdom which was not surpassed by any of his contemporaries in that warlike age. His eldest son, Simon, succeeded him, but lived only a few months after he had assumed the government. Duke Roger, the second son of Count Roger, who had governed the Sicilian States during his father's absence, now inherited all his possessions, and proved himself worthy to be the successor of such a father. Not content with the name of Duke or Count, he erected his States into a monarchy, and ascended the throne under the title of Roger I.

During the reign of this monarch, about the year 1122, the Arabs who had been permitted to remain in Malta, rendered insolent by the mild government of the Siculo-Normans, refused to pay the tribute which had been imposed upon them by Count Roger; and, not satisfied with this, they conspired against the Maltese, and plotted a general massacre of the

* I have thought it necessary to introduce this quotation in this place because reference will be made to it in a future chapter, when we come to consider the condition of Malta under the British Crown.

natives. A day in Holy Week was selected, when the Maltese were expected to be engaged in their devotions, and therefore unprepared to resist a sudden attack. The plot, however, was discovered, and the Maltese, having made all their preparations in silence, instead of waiting for the threatened attack of the Arabs, fell on them with shouts of "Kill the dogs!" and slaughtered a large number of them. The Arabs who escaped retired from the scene of the conflict to a place called *Kalet el bahria*, where they were completely surrounded by the Maltese; all communication with the rest of the island was cut off, and they were closely besieged. A small vessel was then despatched to Messina with intelligence of what had occurred. The king, on hearing of the treachery of the Arabs, immediately sailed for Malta with an armed force, and on his arrival proceeded to put the ringleaders of the rebels to death. The rest were expelled from the island, and took refuge in the Barbary States. Thus terminated the career of the Arabs in Malta. "The fountain at which the massacre took place is still shown to the traveller, and still goes by this expressive name —"The Dogs' Fountain."

CHAPTER III.

HISTORY OF MALTA UNDER THE EMPERORS OF GERMANY AND THE KINGS OF ARRAGON AND CASTILE.—1194 TO 1530.

EMPERORS OF GERMANY.—The Normans had retained possession of Malta for more than fifty years before any one ventured to dispute their right to it; but about the year 1144 the Emperor Emmanuel Comnenus laid claim to the Two Sicilies, Calabria, the principality of Capua, and the islands of Malta and Gozo, on the ground that they had been wrested from the empire. The Normans naturally replied that they held these countries by right of conquest, and that they were prepared to defend them against all claimants. The emperor, however, persisting in his demands, King Roger resolved to give him sensible proof of the valour of the sons of the North, and, fitting out a fleet, he sent it to harass the coasts of the imperial possessions in the East. Corfu fell into the hands of the Normans; and, after a long cruise in the Levant, the Norman fleet returned home laden with considerable treasures. After this the emperor did not again venture to challenge the brave and haughty Normans; and the reign of Roger I. closed without any other memorable exploit, except a successful attack on the city of Tripoli, in North Africa.

Roger I. was succeeded by his son William, surnamed the Bad, who carried on war against Emmanuel Comnenus as vigorously as his father had done before him, without, however, attaining any great results. He was, in turn, succeeded by his son William, surnamed the Good. During the lifetime of these two

sovereigns no event occurred which particularly concerned Malta. The island continued to be governed by a viceroy, appointed by the Siculo-Norman monarch.

William II. having died without issue, in the year 1189, the throne of the Two Sicilies was occupied by Tancred, a natural son of Roger I. and Beatrice di Lecce. Under this prince, Malta and Gozo were ceded to Margaritone di Brindisi, Prince of Taranto and Grand Admiral of Sicily, who, in addition to his other titles, was thenceforward called Count of Malta. It appears to have become quite common at this time to transfer Malta, and other islands similarly situated, from one great lord to another, the sovereign being regarded, however, in every case as supreme ruler. The wishes of the inhabitants were, apparently, quite disregarded; feudal customs prevailed, feudal rights over the natives were claimed by each successive proprietor, and the Maltese gradually descended from the independent and self-reliant position, in which Count Roger had placed them, into a condition in which they were little better than serfs, being bought and sold with the land on which they lived.

One fact must be mentioned in this place, because its bearing on the present condition of Malta is important. The laws established by Count Roger for the government of his Maltese subjects were similar to those which he framed for his subjects in Sicily. The languages in which they were published were the Latin and the Sicilian vernacular, which in the course of time gave way to the purer language of Italy. From that time to the present the Italian language has been the language of the Maltese gentry, whilst the lower order of Maltese speak only Arabic. And now, under a British Government, amidst an Arabic-speaking population, the language of the courts of justice is neither English nor Arabic, but *Italian*—a language wholly unintelligible to nine-tenths of the native population, and to nearly all the British residents. On the abuses which

arise from this strange state of affairs I shall have something to say in a future chapter.

Constance, the posthumous daughter of Roger I., and aunt of William II., had married Henry VI., Emperor of Germany, the son of the famous Frederick Barbarossa. William II. died, as stated above, without issue, and the Sicilian nobles, ignoring the rights of Constance, elected Tancred, Count of Lecce, to fill the vacant throne. Tancred being a natural son of Roger, and having, therefore, no legal right to the throne, the emperor prepared to vindicate the claims of his consort, and landed in Naples at the head of a powerful army. The empress accompanied him. Several conflicts, hardly worthy of the name of battles, took place between the imperial troops and the soldiers of Tancred. Months were passed in petty skirmishes, and before any positive advantage had been gained by either side the emperor was obliged to return to Germany, where important state affairs required his presence. The empress remained at Salerno, and the command of the army was entrusted to one of the emperor's generals. The success which Tancred was unable to achieve whilst the emperor was present he soon achieved when the imperial interests were confided to a deputy. The empress was betrayed into his hands by the inhabitants of Salerno, but with true Norman generosity he scorned to take any advantage of his captive. For a short time he detained her as a state prisoner in Palermo, and having thus established his right to be considered as the victor in the contest for the crown, he permitted her to return to Germany, accompanied by all her suite. The emperor upon this put an end to the war in Italy, without, however, resigning his pretensions to the throne of the Two Sicilies. After a short reign of five years Tancred died in 1194, and was succeeded by his son, William III., who, being a minor, was placed under the guardianship of his mother, Queen Sibilla. As soon as the emperor heard of the death of

Tancred he prepared for a second invasion of Naples. He had now no one to oppose him. The king was a mere boy, and the queen did not venture in defence of her son to offer any resistance to the imperial will. Confiding in the honour of the emperor, she placed herself and her son under his protection; whilst he, disregarding everything but his own ambition, sent the queen to a monastery, and ordered the young king to be put to death. He was now king, without a rival to dispute his title. He did not, however, long enjoy his new dignity. In 1197 he died at Messina, amidst the execrations of those whom he had compelled to become his subjects.

After the death of Henry VI., Constance assumed the government of the Two Sicilies in the name of her son Frederick; but in two years she also expired at Palermo. Her youthful son was placed under the guardianship of Pope Innocent III. In the year 1215, after a long residence at the Papal court, he succeeded to the imperial throne under the title of Frederick II., and was crowned at Rome by Pope Honorius III. The dominion of the Normans over Malta ceased with the death of the Empress Constantine in 1199. The island then passed, together with Sicily, into the hands of the Emperors of Germany, and by them it was sold, or ceded, as stated above, to several feudal lords in succession, who exercised over the inhabitants uncontrolled authority.

During the reigns of Henry VI. and Frederick II. the Maltese are said to have become very skilful sailors. They became, indeed, at this time, quite renowned for their seamanship, and for their bravery. We read of their attacking and destroying a squadron of the Republic of Pisa, and wresting the island of Candia from the Venetians, after a severe naval engagement, in which the Venetian fleet was defeated, and the brave admiral, Andrea Dandalo, taken prisoner.

Frederick II. was succeeded, in the year 1250, by his son Conrad IV., who entrusted the government of the Two Sicilies

and Malta to his illegitimate brother, Manfred. Pope Innocent IV., however, who claimed the right to dispose of the Sicilian crown, "both as superior lord of that particular kingdom and as Vicar of Christ, to whom all the kingdoms of the earth were subjected," * nominated William of Holland to the throne, and preached a crusade against Conrad, who, thereupon, found it necessary to enforce his rights by the sword. He marched into Italy, took forcible possession of Naples, but died before he had time to reap the fruits of his victory, A.D. 1250. His son, the unhappy Conradin, was at this time only three years of age. Manfred, therefore, continued to govern the Sicilies and Malta. Again, however, the interference of the Papal court produced scenes of conflict and bloodshed. Urban IV. offered the Sicilian States, in 1265, to Charles of Anjou, who lost no time in accepting the offer and taking possession of his new dominions. He was crowned King of Sicily and Apulia, and was proceeding to Naples at the head of his army when he encountered the brave Manfred at Benevento. On the 26th February, 1266, the famous battle of Benevento was fought. Manfred was killed, and the Sicilian crown remained in the possession of Charles. He had, however, another great opponent to encounter. The youthful Conradin, although only in his sixteenth year, resolved to contend for his crown. Placing himself at the head of only a thousand men, he made a desperate attempt to cut off Charles at Tagliacozzo, but, unhappily, failed. He fled from the field of battle, and after a series of most remarkable adventures was betrayed to Charles, who had offered a sum of money for his capture. His end was a melancholy one. With some of his brave followers he atoned for the rash attempt to obtain his crown on the scaffold. His mother hastened from Germany with a sum of money to ransom him, but was too late; and the money which was to have

* Hume's "History of England," c. xii. p. 224.

ransomed the gallant prince was expended in building the great convent of the Madonna del Carmine, within the walls of which his remains were deposited. With these mournful events ended the dominion of the emperors of Germany over the Two Sicilies, and consequently over Malta. Their dominion had lasted sixty-seven years, from 1199 to 1266.

KINGS OF ARRAGON AND CASTILE.—The great event in the reign of Charles of Anjou was the massacre known in history as the Sicilian Vespers. The particulars of this terrible massacre are too well known to need recapitulation here. Miège, in his "History of Malta," says that some writers assert that "the conspiracy against the French, which terminated with the Sicilian Vespers, was organised in Malta." There seems, however, no ground whatever for this assertion. Giovanni di Procida and some other leading conspirators are known to have been in Malta a short time before the massacre took place, and they may have taken a few of the influential Maltese into their confidence; but there does not appear any reason whatever for believing that the Maltese people were in any way concerned in the organisation of the infamous plot against the Angevins, although they had been quite as much oppressed by Charles of Anjou as the Sicilians had been.

Constance, the daughter of Manfred, had married Peter III., King of Arragon. To her the Two Sicilies belonged by right of inheritance; and Peter, knowing that Charles was hated by his Sicilian subjects, prepared to take advantage of this circumstance and to claim the crown in right of his wife. He was, doubtless, acquainted with all the particulars of the conspiracy, for on the very day when the massacre of the Angevins took place an Arragonese fleet entered the Bay of Palermo, and shortly afterwards Peter was solemnly crowned King of Sicily in the cathedral of that city.

Charles was in Tuscany when the news reached him that his troops in Sicily had been barbarously murdered, and his

crown transferred to the King of Arragon. He immediately set about making endeavours to regain his lost authority, but his fleet, commanded by his son was defeated by Roger, the Arragonese admiral. An Englishman named Corner governed Malta as Charles' deputy. As soon, therefore, as Roger had defeated Charles' fleet in the waters of Sicily, he steered for Malta and made a vigorous attack on the island. A bloody engagement took place; Corner nobly defended the island, but was forced to surrender. The authority of Charles of Anjou was at an end, and the island passed into the hands of the sovereigns of Arragon. The dominion of Charles of Anjou in Sicily had lasted sixteen years, and in Malta eighteen; and during those eighteen years the inhabitants of Malta drained the cup of misery to the very dregs.

Not long after these events, Charles of Anjou and his enemy were both laid in the grave. Charles died in the month of January, 1285, and Peter followed him in November of the same year. The son of Charles of Anjou succeeded him in the kingdom of Naples, under the title of Charles II., but he is better known as Charles the Lame. The crown of Arragon fell to Alphonsus, the eldest son of Peter III., whilst Sicily, with the adjacent islands, including Malta and Gozo, were given to James, a younger son of Peter.

If the condition of the Maltese had been unhappy under the government of Charles of Anjou, it was not much improved under that of the kings of Arragon. The island, with its dependencies, was sold or bartered without any reference to the wishes of the inhabitants. Each successive master consulted only his own interest in the administration of the government of the island, and little or no attention was paid to the representations frequently made by the Maltese.

After passing through many hands it was purchased by, or perhaps mortgaged to, a wealthy Spaniard, Don Gonsalvo Monroi, for a sum of money equivalent to about £15,000

sterling. Oppressed beyond measure, feeling themselves degraded into the condition of slaves, and wearied with uttering repeated remonstrances, the Maltese resolved to make a bold and manly effort for their liberation. They proposed to raise amongst themselves the sum for which the island had been purchased or mortgaged, and thus to redeem themselves from slavery. The proposal was accepted, the money was paid, and by a public act of King Martin of Arragon it was decreed "that the islands of Malta and Gozo should henceforth never be separated from the kingdom of Sicily; and that their inhabitants should enjoy equal privileges with those of Palermo, Messina, and Catania."

I subjoin a list of the sovereigns of Sicily and Malta from the restoration of the monarchy to the year 1530, which I have extracted from the valuable "History of Malta" in Italian, by Dr. G. A. Vassallo. Much of the information contained in this and the preceding chapter has also been derived from the same source.

NORMAN.

1. Count Roger, ruled over Sicily and Calabria from 1071; and over Malta from 1091 to 1101.
2. Roger I., 1101 to 1154.
3. William I., 1154 to 1166.
4. William II., 1166 to 1189.
5. Tancred, 1189 to 1194.

GERMAN.

6. Henry VI., Emperor of Germany, married to Constance, daughter of Roger I., reigned from 1194 to 1197.
7. Frederick (I. of Sicily and II. of Germany) from 1197 to 1250.
8. Conrad, Emperor from 1250 to 1254.
9. Manfred, his brother (reigned as deputy of Conradin, son of Conrad), from 1254 to 1266.

FRENCH.

10. Charles of Anjou, Sovereign of Sicily from 1266 to 1282, and of Malta to 1283.

SPANISH.

11. Peter I., King of Arragon from 1282-83 to 1285.
12. James, his son, 1285 to 1296.
13. Frederick II. (brother of James), 1296 to 1337.
14. Peter II. (son of Frederick II.), 1337 to 1342.
15. Louis (son of Peter II.), 1342 to 1355.
16. Frederick III. (brother of Louis), 1355 to 1377.
17. Mary (his daughter, wife of Martin the Young), 1377 to 1402.
18. Martin I. (the Young), 1402 to 1409.
19. Martin II. (the Old), 1409 to 1410.
    An interregnum of two years.
20. Ferdinand I. (of Castile), 1412 to 1416.
21. Alphonsus (his son), 1416 to 1458.
22. John (brother of Alphonsus), 1458 to 1479.
23. Ferdinand (the Catholic, son of John), 1479 to 1516.
24. Charles V., 1516 to 1555, as ruler of Sicily, and to 1530 as ruler of Malta.

CHAPTER IV.

MALTA UNDER THE KNIGHTS OF ST. JOHN.—L'ISLE ADAM TO LA VALLETTE. 1530 TO 1557.

WE have now arrived at the most interesting period in the history of Malta. From the moment when the Emperor Charles V. granted the island as a fief to the gallant Knights of St. John up to the present time, it has occupied a prominent position in European history.

The institution of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem took place at Jerusalem in the year 1085. Several European merchants had obtained from Abu Tamin Bonesor, Caliph of Egypt and Governor of Syria, permission to erect a hospital in Jerusalem for the benefit of the pilgrims who visited the Holy Sepulchre. The hospital was annexed to a chapel dedicated to St. John the Almoner, which was at first kept by the Benedictine monks. The first president of the hospital was Gerard, a man of exemplary piety and of ardent zeal for religion.

Shortly after the foundation of this hospital and chapel, events occurred which induced the sovereigns of Europe to undertake those expeditions which are known in history as the Crusades. The departure of the first Crusade from Europe was fixed for the month of August, 1096; but early in the spring of that year, before the barons had assembled their vassals and completed their preparations, Peter the Hermit placed himself at the head of a vast multitude of men, women, and children, and set off on his way to Constantinople by the valley of the Danube. Soon, however, a regular army was marshalled,

and troops familiar with the battle-field were enlisted from almost every country in Europe. The leaders of this army were men of renown. The illustrious Godfrey de Bouillon was chosen to conduct the first division. The second division was commanded by Robert Curthose, Duke of Normandy; and the third division was placed under the command of Raymond de St. Gille, commonly called the rich Count of Toulouse.

The three divisions of the army pursued different routes, having agreed to unite their forces on the Asiatic side of the Bosphorus. A general muster took place on the plains of Bithynia, in Asia Minor, where a hundred thousand knights, the flower of European chivalry, were assembled; the total number of Crusaders being six hundred thousand, exclusive of priests, women, and children. The first city against which they bore arms was Nice or Nicæa, where the celebrated council was held in the reign of the Emperor Constantine, A.D. 325, which condemned the Arian heresy. Nice was taken after a short resistance. They next turned their attention to Antioch, where the followers of the Redeemer were first called Christians. Antioch, too, surrendered; but the victors were in their turn besieged by an immense army of Turks and Arabs. Seeing nothing but a cruel death before them if they fell into the hands of their Mohammedan enemies, the Crusaders made a bold and desperate sally, and extricated themselves from their perilous position. They then continued their journey, and when the army reached Jerusalem its numbers had diminished to forty thousand. After a siege of six weeks the Crusaders entered the Holy City as victors, and the banner of the Cross was planted where the Crescent had been displayed. The vengeance which they wreaked on the inhabitants of the ill-fated city was fearful. Seventy thousand Moslems and an incredible number of Jews, who were objects of greater hatred even than the Moslems, were cruelly put to death. The Holy Sepulchre was now proclaimed

free to the Christian world. Bare-headed and bare-footed, the superstitious conquerors ascended the hill of Calvary amidst the loud anthems of the clergy, whilst the few remaining Turks hastened on all sides out of the country, leaving their Christian foes to enjoy it in security.

During the siege of Jerusalem, Gerard, the president of the Hospital of St. John, was kept in irons by the Caliph, who feared lest he should render assistance to the crusading army; and one of the first acts of Godfrey de Bouillon on capturing the city was to visit the prison in which Gerard was confined, to restore him to liberty, and to grant to him, for the benefit of the hospital over which he presided, the proceeds of large tracts of land in Brabant.

Many other Crusaders, following the example of Godfrey, made large donations to the hospital, and some even volunteered their services in the work of attending the sick. Gerard then proposed that a regular Order should be established for the purpose of attending to the duties of the hospital. The proposal was favourably received by his companions, and, renouncing their secular condition, they enrolled themselves at once as monks, and took upon themselves within the precincts of the Holy Sepulchre the three vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience.

Gerard, after governing the new Order for more than twenty years, died in the year 1118 or 1120, and Raymond de Puy, a Frenchman, was chosen to succeed him. Raymond was a soldier, and perceiving that the Mohammedans, when opportunity offered, still continued to persecute the Christians in Palestine, he proposed that the Order should be recast on a military model, and that the duty of waging war in defence of Christianity should be superadded to the duties of the hospital and the chapel. This new proposal was received with universal approbation; and Pope Paschal II. having been requested to recognise the new Order of knighthood, pronounced his benediction upon it, and commanded that the distinguishing badge

of the military-sacerdotal Knights of St. John should be a white cross on a black ground. The skill of Raymond soon brought the Order into notice all over Christendom. He assumed the title of Master of the Sacred Hospital, and governed with great repute for forty years.

In 1187, Saladin, Sultan of Egypt, led an immense army into Palestine. The Knights of St. John and the Templars fought side by side; but the Sultan's troops poured in such numbers into the country that resistance was impossible, and Jerusalem was again conquered by the followers of the Prophet. At this conjuncture the knights retired to Ptolemais (now called St. Jean d'Acre), and after besieging it for three years, and displaying prodigious feats of valour, they took possession of it on the 12th July, 1191.

Ten years after, Ptolemais was attacked by a powerful army under Halib el Ascraf, Sultan of Egypt, and captured, after a severe struggle. Fighting bravely to the last, the Knights of St. John, in company with the Teutonic Knights and the Templars, were obliged to abandon the city, and thus to relinquish the only position which they held in Palestine. With John de Villiers, their Grand Master, at their head, they set sail for Cyprus. There they were kindly received by Henry II., the king of the island, and were permitted to establish themselves at Limisso.

The next move of the Knights of St. John was to Rhodes, which was granted to them as a residence by the Emperor Andronicus II. during the Grand-mastership of Foulque de Villaret. Here they resided two hundred and twelve years. In 1522, Sultan Solyman II., commonly called the Magnificent, cast a longing eye on Rhodes, and led an expedition in person against the island. The Grand Master of the Order at that time was Villiers de L'Isle Adam, a venerable French knight, whose renown for bravery and diplomatic skill had spread all over Europe. For six months L'Isle Adam and his brave companions

in arms defied the immense host of the great Solyman; but, at last, worn out with fatigue and disheartened at having been abandoned by those Christian princes from whom he anticipated help, L'Isle Adam yielded to the solicitations of the inhabitants, and negotiated for a surrender. It is but just to say that Solyman behaved on this occasion like an enlightened and wise prince. He allowed the knights to leave Rhodes quietly and without any molestation. He permitted all the Christian inhabitants who wished to accompany the knights to do so without hindrance, and he granted them twelve days to collect their movable property and to place it on board the vessels of the Order.

Thus was Rhodes lost for ever to the Knights of St. John. After various adventures, L'Isle Adam and his followers arrived in Italy, where they were graciously received, and treated with the greatest respect for their spirited and heroic defence of their island home. Notwithstanding this, however, they felt that their glory had departed from them; they were wanderers on the face of the earth, and many doubted whether the Order would ever recover from the terrible blow which had just been inflicted upon it. L'Isle Adam, however, was not a man to give way to despair. He sought a conference with the Pontiff, through whose instrumentality he hoped to recruit the shattered forces of the Order. Accordingly, whilst his ships were lying in the harbour of Civita Vecchia, he sent an ambassador to request an audience with the Pope. The course of events favoured his designs in the most remarkable manner. Pope Adrian VI. assured him of his sympathy, and promised to use his influence with the Christian princes of Europe in behalf of the Order. Not very long after, however, he died, and a cloud came over L'Isle Adam's prospects, but only to be succeeded by brilliant sunshine. The successor of Adrian was Clement VII., a Knight of the Order of St. John, L'Isle Adam's brother in arms; and one of his first acts on becoming

Pope was to create L'Isle Adam a cardinal, and to grant to the Order the town of Viterbo as a residence, and the port of Civita Vecchia as a harbour for the fleet, "until such time" (thus he expressed himself) "as God should put into the hearts of the Christian princes of Europe to assign to the knights an island and a port whence they might renew their exertions in defence of the Christian faith."

Pope Clement was anxious to see the Knights of St. John comfortably established in some independent possession. Several places were suggested as likely to prove convenient; but, after due consideration, the Pontiff came to the conclusion that the most desirable locality would be the islands of Malta and Gozo, which then formed a portion of the empire of Charles V. L'Isle Adam accordingly undertook to send an embassy to the emperor, to represent to him the unhappy condition in which the knights were placed, and to request of him that he would grant to them the two islands of Malta and Gozo as their future residence.

The answer of the emperor was far from favourable. He was not unwilling to see an Order so renowned for chivalric actions settled within his dominions; but the restrictions which he sought to impose on the knights were such as to render it almost impossible that they should submit to them. Meanwhile L'Isle Adam began to entertain some hope of being able to reconquer Rhodes, and therefore purposely delayed the negotiations concerning Malta. Some of the wealthy inhabitants of Rhodes, being dissatisfied with the Ottoman Government, kept up a secret correspondence with the Grand Master, and urged him to attempt the conquest of the island. Solyman, however, discovered the plot that had been formed against him, and punished some of the conspirators. L'Isle Adam, on hearing this, perceived that all his designs for the conquest of Rhodes were baffled, and began to feel the necessity of renewing his application to the emperor. A remarkable

train of incidents favoured his plans. Events of the greatest importance were agitating Europe. England, France, and Germany were governed by restless and ambitious monarchs. The Emperor Charles V. was the object of secret jealousy on the part of Francis I. of France and Henry VIII. of England; and the Holy League was formed under the direction of the Pope to curb his power. Francis had been a prisoner at Madrid ever since the memorable battle of Pavia; and the Queen Regent of France, the mother of Francis, being anxious to procure his liberation on honourable terms, had determined to send her daughter, the Duchess d'Alençon, to Madrid to treat with Charles. Knowing the devotion of L'Isle Adam to the Court of France, the Queen Regent determined to secure his services on so important a mission. She accordingly wrote to him to request that he would place certain vessels belonging to the Order at the disposal of the duchess, to convey her from France to the coast of Spain. L'Isle Adam saw his opportunity, repaired at once to Marseilles with his fleet, and attended the duchess till her arrival in Madrid. The negotiation succeeded. Francis regained his liberty; and L'Isle Adam, in his frequent interviews with the emperor, pleaded with great eloquence the cause of his illustrious Order. Meanwhile the Pope used all his influence to second L'Isle Adam's request, and, after some time spent in deliberation, the emperor was induced to give his consent to the proposed arrangement. On the 24th of March, 1530, the deed of cession was signed, and the emperor declared that, "in consideration of the particular affection which is felt towards the Order, and in consideration of the important services which it had rendered for ages past to the Christian republic, he granted, in his name and that of his successors, to the Most Reverend the Grand Master, and to the Order of St. John, as a noble, free, and unencumbered fief, the city of Tripoli and the islands of Malta and Gozo, with their entire jurisdiction

and authority, civil as well as military, subject to no other condition than that they would annually, on the day of All Saints (1st November), present a falcon to the Viceroy of Sicily in the name of the Order."

On the 26th of October, 1530, the Grand Master, with his suite, arrived in Malta, and took formal possession of the island and its dependencies, having first solemnly promised to preserve to the Maltese all their rights and privileges.

Malta is described as being at this time nothing better than a shelterless rock of soft sandstone called *tufa*. The surface of the rock was scantily covered with earth, but of so coarse and arid a kind that grass refused to grow in it. It produced, however, abundance of figs, melons, and other fruits, besides cotton and cinnamon, which, together with honey, were exchanged by the native traders for corn with their Sicilian neighbours. The population was about twelve thousand; but the rapacity of the corsairs, who made constant descents upon the island, sweeping whole families away into captivity, kept the inhabitants in constant terror. The frequent incursions of the Saracens and Turks had completely desolated the island, and the impoverished inhabitants could barely provide themselves with the necessaries of life. In the year 1516, only fourteen years before the cession of the island to the Order of St. John, all the revenue which the imperial governor could wring from the people was forty ducats.*

* The following is a condensed report of the commissioner sent to inspect Malta on the part of L'Isle Adam, as quoted by Lieut.-Colonel Porter, R.E.:— "That Malta, about sixty miles in circuit, was but an arid rock, covered in many places with sand, and in a few with a light scattering of earth brought from the neighbouring continent, or from Sicily; that it had neither river, nor rivulet, nor spring, nor any other fresh water, for the most part, save rain preserved in tanks or cisterns, except a few wells, rather brackish; that it produced little corn, not half enough of anything to feed the scanty population; that it would be a very unpleasant residence, particularly during the summer; violently, nearly intolerably hot, with not one forest tree, hardly a green thing to repose the eye upon; and a sort of ill-walled town, called its capital, in the middle of the island, at a con-

The history of the Order of St. John, from its formation in 1085 to its establishment in Malta in 1530, is full of interest, and the diligent study of it will amply repay the student for the labour bestowed on it. Forty-three Grand Masters had preceded L'Isle Adam, and many of these had immortalised themselves by deeds of valour. The plan of this work, however, forbids me to speak of these. My object is to lay before the reader a concise and accurate sketch of the history of Malta. Omitting, therefore, all mention of the predecessors of L'Isle Adam, I take up the history of the Knights of St. John at the point at which their connection with Malta commences.

L'ISLE ADAM, 1530.—After the hardships which the Grand Master had endured, he found the repose which he enjoyed in his new island home most grateful. All his anxiety respecting his beloved Order was now at an end; a secure asylum had been gained, and the Grand Master was once more an independent ruler. He was no sooner settled in Malta than he began to put the island in a position to resist any attacks that might be made upon it by the Turks. The Castle of St. Angelo was strengthened, and the fortifications around the Borgo were materially improved. New laws were made, and public duties were assigned to each member of the Order. For many years past the government of the island had been weak, and occasionally tyrannical. The Maltese now cordially welcomed a government which, although often tyrannical, possessed no element of weakness, and knew how to make itself respected as well as feared. It took L'Isle Adam three years

siderable distance from the sea; that, however, the stone is not hard, but rather *tufo*, or soft, and easy to be cut into any shape; that the people speak a dialect of Arabic or Moorish, and are noted for their frugality of living; that for the rest the harbours may be rendered good, and that what are termed *casali* are miserable villages or shocking huts, rather befitting fishermen and pirates than the renowned Hospitallers; that, as to Gozo, it was too little, though, in comparison of Malta, fertile and pleasant."

This description of the islands and their inhabitants holds good in nearly every particular even in the present day.

to organise the several departments of the little State, and to lay a secure foundation on which future Grand Masters might build a glorious and enduring edifice. Having ably completed this task, he convoked a General Chapter of the Order (November, 1533), and laid before that venerable body his plans for the future government of his new subjects, and for the administration of the property of the Order both in Malta and in the several continental States in which priories or commanderies had been founded. At this General Chapter some of the Maltese gentry demanded admission into the Order, in accordance with one of the articles of the treaty signed by the Grand Master when he took possession of the island. To their great surprise they were bluntly refused, on the ground that they were excluded by the fundamental rules of the Order, which required that candidates for admission, besides being of noble birth, should have been born within the limits of a priory in one of the eight *languages* into which the Order was divided.* With the latter condition the Maltese candidates had evidently not complied, and they were therefore pronounced disqualified for admission to the rank of knighthood. There can be no doubt that in signing the article of the treaty above referred to, L'Isle Adam had been guilty of deception; for he could not have been ignorant of the rules of the Order over which he so ably presided. By way of compensation, however, for this breach of promise, the Maltese were permitted to enter

* "There were at first three languages in the Order, viz., Provence, Auvergne, and France. Then followed Germany, Italy, Arragon, and England. In the course of time that of Castile was added, and for that of England was substituted the Anglo-Bavarian language.

"The Order was also divided into priories, bailiwicks, and commanderies.

"There were three classes of knights. 1. Knights of Justice. 2. Chaplains and Priests of Obedience. 3. Serving Brothers.

"Proofs of nobility were requisite for admission into the first class; and proofs of free citizenship for admission into the second class. The third class was open to all candidates, who generally belonged to a low grade in society."—*Boisgelin's "History of Malta."*

the Order as ecclesiastics, and to serve in the ranks of the army without the distinction of knighthood. Many availed themselves of this privilege, and rose to the highest rank both in the Church and in the army.

L'Isle Adam had now reached the age of sixty-five. His life had been full of remarkable incidents; he had endured hardships and anxiety, and he naturally hoped to spend his declining years in honourable ease in Malta. But no sooner had he completed his arrangements for the government of the island than a fever brought his career to a close. His death occurred in the middle of August, 1534, nearly four years after his arrival in Malta. His body was laid in a marble tomb in the chapel of Fort St. Angelo, and the epitaph inscribed on it commenced with these simple and expressive words:—"Valour victorious over Fortune."

PETER DU PONT, 1534.—L'Isle Adam was succeeded by Peter du Pont, of the illustrious house of Asti, in Piedmont. At the time of his election Du Pont was residing in Calabria, and being in no hurry to encumber himself with State affairs, he continued at his Italian home, until news reached him from Malta that Barbarossa, the celebrated Turkish admiral, had taken possession of Tunis, and was threatening Tripoli. Upon this the Grand Master roused himself from his apathy, and hastened over to Malta, which he reached on November 10th, 1534. He was well received by the Maltese people, and by his companions in arms. His first public act was to send succours to Tripoli, and to organise an expedition to act in concert with the fleet and army commanded by the Emperor Charles V. in person. The Goletta, the port of Tunis, was attacked and captured. Tunis itself fell into the hands of the emperor; Barbarossa fled, and Muley Hassan, who had been dethroned by Barbarossa, was replaced on the throne. Charles V. had reason to congratulate himself that he had been the restorer of an Order which enrolled in its ranks the bravest soldiers in the

world. He had often heard of the valour of the Knights of St. John; what he witnessed at the attack on Tunis and the Goletta convinced him that the Order well deserved the praise that had been bestowed on it. Barbarossa having been defeated at Tunis, the colony of the Order at Tripoli was freed from all anxiety. The fleet returned to Malta, and the Grand Master conferred honours on those who had distinguished themselves against the infidels. Several additions were made to the Castle of St. Angelo by order of Peter du Pont; but whilst he was planning the extension of the fortifications around the Borgo, he was attacked by fever, and died on November 18th, 1535, at the age of seventy-one. He ruled just fifteen months, and was interred by the side of L'Isle Adam, in the chapel of Fort St. Angelo.

DIDIER DE St. JAILLE, 1536.—The next Grand Master was Desiderius di Santa Ialla, or Didier de St. Jaille, a knight who had greatly distinguished himself during the siege of Rhodes. He was in France when the news of his election reached him; and, like his predecessors, he showed no anxiety to enter upon the duties of his office. He allowed several months to slip by before he set off for Malta, and when he had got as far as Montpelier, he was suddenly taken ill, and died there in the course of a few days.

JOHN D'OMEDES, 1536.—On the 20th of October, 1536, a General Chapter was convened for the election of a new Grand Master. For several years dissensions had existed between the languages of Spain and France. On the present occasion each laboured hard to secure the election of a Grand Master; but the influence of Spain prevailed, and the choice of the Chapter fell on John d'Omedes, a man described by Dr. Vassallo as "ambitious, avaricious, and cruel." He was in Spain when the election took place, and, imitating the example of his predecessors, he allowed fifteen months to elapse before he entered on his duties as chief magistrate of the Order. About this time,

Dragut, the famous corsair, began his predatory excursions, and landing at Gozo, carried many of the inhabitants into slavery.* An expedition was organised to act against Dragut, but the pirate was too wary to encounter his foes in open fight, and, after a skirmish in the neighbourhood of Tripoli, the vessels of the Order returned to harbour, leaving Dragut master of the seas.

Meanwhile, the Grand Master spent his time in inglorious ease at Malta. He is said to have been very fond of natural history, and to have collected a considerable number of live animals from all parts of Europe. A great portion of his time was spent in religious exercises in his private chapel; and when he was not engaged in prayer, he was employed in studying the habits of the animals in his park. Public affairs seldom occupied his attention; and when he did take an active part in the government, he was sure to come into collision with the Maltese gentry. Ever since the time of Roger the Norman, the Maltese had had a Council, to which they gave the name of *Universitá*. The privileges enjoyed by this Council were similar to those enjoyed by the corporations of cities and

* Vertot gives the following account of Dragut: "He was born in a little village of Asia Minor lying over against the island of Rhodes. His father and mother were Mohammedans, both of them poor, who subsisted by tilling the ground and by the labour of their hands; but this obscure and painful way of life not suiting the warm and restless temper of young Dragut, he enlisted, when he was but twelve years of age, under an officer of artillery who served on board the Grand Seignor's galley. He was at first a cabin boy, then a common sailor, next a pilot, and afterwards, by his patron's instructions, an excellent gunner, in which quality he served several years on board of different vessels; when having gained some money, he came to be a partner in a brigantine of corsairs. After this he soon got a galliot to himself, and took some considerable prizes with it; upon which he increased the number of his ships, and made himself dreaded all over the Levant. There was not a pilot amongst the infidels who had such a perfect knowledge of the islands, ports, and roadsteads of the Mediterranean as Dragut had; and as all who sailed through the Levant at that time were more or less dependent on Barbarossa, the Grand Seignor's admiral, Dragut sought his protection, and went to Algiers to offer his services, which were at once accepted."

towns in our own country at the present day. D'Omedes had not been accustomed to representative institutions and municipal laws. He tried to govern the Maltese as he governed the knights. He was a soldier and a monk, and he ruled as soldiers and monks always rule — arbitrarily and harshly. Hence he was perpetually in difficulties. His Maltese subjects groaned under his severe yoke. Complaints were made on all sides, which he was too indolent to regard, and every year the breach between him and his subjects became wider. It was during his magistracy that the Emperor Charles V. undertook his celebrated, but unfortunate, expedition to Algiers. Thousands of Spaniards lost their lives on the sands of Africa, whilst a hurricane almost annihilated the imperial fleet. The Order lost eighty knights and four hundred soldiers, about half of whom were Maltese. The fear of an attack by Dragut appears to have urged the Grand Master to rouse himself from his habitual indifference, and to give orders for strengthening the fortifications. Colonel Porter, R.E., in his "History of the Fortress of Malta," says that, "in 1541, the Grand Master, John d'Omedes, called in the chief engineer of the emperor, named Caramolin, in order to receive his opinion as to the proper steps to be taken for the due security of the fort, and improvement of the existing works. That officer condemned both the Borgo and St. Angelo, as being incapable of maintaining any serious or protracted defence; nor did he consider it advisable to make any great outlay for their additional security, deeming that their situation, overlooked as it was by so many of the neighbouring heights within a very easy distance, was radically defective and untenable. He purposed, therefore, as a more efficient measure, to fortify the promontory which divided the two harbours, called Mount Sceberras."

This was the origin of the splendid fortifications which enclose the city of Valletta, and which fill every intelligent traveller with astonishment,—fortifications which, for grandeur

and strength, have never been equalled in any country in the world. "The fortress of Malta" (to quote again the words of Colonel Porter) "must ever stand an undying record and proud memorial of that illustrious fraternity beneath whose sway the island was raised from a barren and inhospitable rock to the proud position of the most powerful stronghold in the world, if we except those where nature has contributed to aid the resources of science."

D'Omedes lived to be eighty years of age. He died in 1553, having held the office of Grand Master seventeen years. He died unregretted, both by the Order and by the native population of Malta. Dr. Vassallo tells us, in a tone of bitter irony, that "the convent and the people received the news of his death with the most edifying resignation." He appears to have been ill suited to his position. And yet the period of his administration was not altogether barren of results. The fortifications, which are now reckoned amongst the wonders of the world, were begun under his superintendence; and laws were published, which consolidated the power of the Order, whilst they did not materially abridge the liberty of his subjects. Vertot gives the following account of D'Omedes: —"He had distinguished himself by his valour at the siege of Rhodes; he was religious, and affected a great air of regularity and devotion, but was withal of an imperious and revengeful nature. He was covetous, and so bent on enriching his family that he almost ruined the Order by the grants he made in his lifetime to his relations, in contempt of the laws and statutes of the society. What he left behind him was so very inconsiderable that several knights, indignant at seeing that he had alienated his principal effects, and disposed of them to his nephews, proposed to have the care of his funeral left to them; but the lords of the Council rejected this proposal as unbecoming the generosity and grandeur of the Order. He was buried, as usual, at the expense of the Order, and with

a magnificence that was rather suited to his dignity than to his personal merit."

CLAUDE DE LA SENGLE, 1553.—John d'Omedes was succeeded by a French knight, named Claude de la Sengle. He was the ambassador of the Order in Rome at the time when he was elected to fill the office of Grand Master; and, unlike his predecessors, he lost not a moment in proceeding to Malta to enter upon his new duties. Bosio, a contemporary historian, in announcing the result of the election, attributed it to the direct agency of the Holy Spirit. The Pontiff, Julius III., bestowed high honours on the new Grand Master. There were public rejoicings in Rome; salvos of artillery were fired, and brilliant fireworks were displayed; and when De la Sengle touched at Messina, on his way to Malta, the people of Messina vied with the inhabitants of Rome in their enthusiastic reception of him. His first care was to complete the line of fortifications commenced by his predecessor around the Borgo; and within the newly-raised ramparts he laid the foundation of a town, which received the name of La Sengle, and which is now called Senglea. It was during his administration that the statue of St. John the Baptist, and the eagle which is used as a lectern at high mass in the Cathedral of St. John at Malta, were presented to the Order. A bronze statue of Moses, holding in his hands the tables of the law, was presented at the same time. This latter statue stands at the right side of the principal altar in the Cathedral of St. John.

In the summer of 1555 an unhappy dispute arose amongst the knights in consequence of the command of the galleys having been conferred on some French officers, whereas the emperor had stipulated that only Spanish or Italian knights should have the command at sea. The Grand Master's health is said to have suffered seriously on hearing that dissension prevailed through all ranks of the Order, in consequence of his partiality to his own countrymen. He was at this time

sixty-three years of age; and feeling himself unable to attend to the duties of his office, he nominated, as his lieutenant, John de la Vallette, Prior of St. Gilles, who, about two years after, became his successor. De la Sengle died on the 18th of August, 1557, having governed the Order nearly four years.

CHAPTER V.

MALTA UNDER THE KNIGHTS OF ST. JOHN.—GRAND-MASTERSHIP OF LA VALLETTE.—THE SIEGE. 1557 TO 1565.

JOHN DE LA VALLETTE, 1557. — There was no difficulty in selecting a successor to Claude de la Sengle. No sooner had one of the electors proposed to the Council the name of John de la Vallette, Commander of the Order, than all were unanimous in his favour. This nobleman had resided in Malta since the time of his reception into the Order, and had filled several important offices. He was known to be a brave soldier and an able statesman, and was as much esteemed by his companions in arms as he was dreaded by his enemies, the Mohammedans. He proved to be the very man that the exigency of the times required. The Order, under his administration, recovered its ancient authority, which had been much impaired in some places on the Continent; he defended Malta against the most desperate attack which it ever encountered from the Turks; and he laid the foundation of the present capital of the island, which is called after him, Valletta.

The first public act of La Vallette was to occupy the entire peninsula of Mount Sceberras (the peninsula on which the city of Valletta now stands) with a line of ramparts similar to those which had been constructed at Senglea. He had been informed by trustworthy spies whom he kept in his pay at Constantinople, that Solyman, the same Solyman who thirty-five years before had driven the knights from Rhodes, entertained the idea of driving them also from Malta. But Solyman was

now old, and unable to command an expedition in person. It was necessary that he should entrust the command of his forces to faithful and experienced officers.

The Grand Master, in anticipation of the intended attack, made every exertion to put the island in a state of defence; and such was the slowness of the Sultan's preparations, that eight years elapsed before the threatened blow was struck. During these anxious years every effort was made which prudence and valour could suggest to enable the Order to offer a successful resistance. The Grand Master, with a view to superintend in person the construction of the new fortifications, left his residence in the castle, and took a house on the eminence above the Great Harbour, now called the hill of Santa Margarita; and not content with this, he and his knights, on more than one occasion, took their places amongst the labourers, and assisted in carrying earth to the ramparts.

Whilst these preparations for war were going on in Malta, a great event was taking place on the continent of Europe. The great Council of Trent was assembled to oppose what were called the innovations of the Protestants. The Grand Master, La Vallette, was invited to the Council, and was requested to take his seat amongst the sovereigns of Christendom. Being unable, however, to leave Malta, he deputed the knights Villegagnon and Royas de Portalrouge to attend as ambassadors from the Order. The former was taken ill, and was unable to go; so that Royas had to appear alone. Before he was admitted to the Council, he had great difficulties to surmount. The bishops present declared it to be unjust that a private member of a religious Order, who was but a deputy from a society of lay brothers, should have a seat amongst ambassadors, and should thus take precedence of the bishops. This objection, however, was overruled. It was agreed that the ambassador of the Order of St. John should take his seat amongst the other

ambassadors without prejudice to the rights of the bishops; and, in consequence, Royas was admitted to the session of the 7th September, 1563.

On taking his seat, Royas apologised for the absence of the Grand Master, who, he said, was busily engaged in Malta, making preparations to resist the expected attack of the Turks. He then entreated the fathers in the name of the Order to consider its antiquity, its nobility, and the services it had rendered to Christendom during a long series of ages; he begged the Council to command that the priories which had been seized by the Protestants should be restored; and he earnestly desired a solemn confirmation of all the privileges that had been bestowed on the Order since its foundation.

The proctor replied in general terms, that the fathers allowed his excuse for the Grand Master, that they would not be wanting in the preservation of the priories and commanderies, and would maintain the privileges of an Order which had proved so useful to the Church.

During the year 1563 a general summons was issued to all the knights dispersed through the several countries of Europe to repair immediately to Malta. The agents whom the Order employed in Sicily levied a body of two thousand foot; the Viceroy of Sicily sent two companies of infantry; the ships and galleys of the Order were engaged in carrying arms, ammunition, and provisions from Sicily; and in obedience to the summons of the Grand Master, knights began to arrive daily from all quarters in considerable numbers, all eager to discharge the obligations of their profession, and to display their zeal and bravery in the conflict with the infidels.

Solyman, being unable to lead his troops in person, entrusted the command of the land forces to Mustafà Pacha, and the command of the fleet to Admiral Piali, with strict injunctions to both these officers to take Dragut into their confidence, and to attempt nothing without his approval and co-operation.

Mustafà had acquired the esteem of Solyman by gaining several important victories. He was an old officer, sixty-five years of age, harsh to his soldiers, and vindictive to his enemies, especially to all who professed the Christian faith. Piali was a man of obscure origin. When Solyman was returning from his first campaign in Hungary, after the capture of Belgrade, he found him in swaddling-clothes, lying in a ploughed field, where probably his mother had abandoned him to save herself by flight. The Sultan took charge of the child, had him well educated, and appointed him in due time to one of the inferior offices in his army. Piali distinguished himself by his bravery and prudence, and obtained rapid promotion. His patron, Solyman, by way of rewarding him for his services, gave him one of his grand-daughters in marriage, and made him Pacha of the Seas, or commander-in-chief of his naval forces. The command of the fleet destined for the attack on Malta, therefore, naturally devolved on him.

As soon as La Vallette received certain intelligence that the Ottoman fleet had sailed from Constantinople, he ordered a general muster of his forces to be made, and found them on inspection to consist of upwards of 8,000 men of all ranks. According to Colonel Porter, the numbers were:—

Knights	474
Servants-at-arms	67
Regular forces—militia and other forces . .	8,155
Total	8,696

Dr. Vassallo gives the number as 9,117; and Bosio reckons only 8,500 combatants of all ranks. Vertot states that La Vallette's forces consisted of "about 700 knights, besides serving brothers, and 8,500 men, who were either soldiers of the galleys and foreign troops in the service of the Order, or else townsmen and peasants who had been formed into companies." One solitary English knight was present with the Grand

Master's forces, Sir Oliver Starkey, his Latin Secretary. Sir Oliver's remains now lie by the side of those of La Vallette, in the crypt of the Cathedral of St. John, at Malta.

Having reviewed his troops, the Grand Master proceeded to assign to them their several posts; and, in accordance with the ancient usage of the Order, this was done by *languages*. Each language undertook to defend the post that should be assigned to it, and the soldiers and militia were divided amongst the several languages. The three languages of France, including Provence and Auvergne, had the defence of the Borgo entrusted to them; and, as this was an important post, and one of considerable extent, they were assisted by part of the language of Castile. The Admiral de Monte, with the knights of the language of Italy, undertook to defend Senglea. The language of Arragon, which comprehended the knights of that kingdom, and those of the provinces of Catalonia and Navarre, were posted on the lines now occupied by what is called the Gate of Bormola; whilst the language of England, part of that of Castile, with the Portuguese and German knights, were posted on the mole towards the Borgo, and extended themselves as far as the ditch of the Castle of St. Angelo. Detachments were sent to the neighbouring islands of Gozo and to Notabile, the capital of Malta, now called Città Vecchia. Fort St. Elmo, which was destined to play so important a part in the siege, was usually garrisoned by sixty men. These were under the command of an aged knight, named De Broglio, a native of Piedmont. The commander, D'Eguerras, was ordered to join the garrison with sixty knights; and a Spanish knight, named John de la Cerda, who had a body of infantry under his command, was also required to place himself under the orders of De Broglio.

The Grand Master took up his abode in the Castle of St. Angelo, whence he could easily issue his orders to his troops and observe the movements of the enemy at sea; and

the veteran, Grand Marshal Coppier was appointed to move with a select body of knights to any part of the island on which the Turks might effect a landing, and to oppose their landing if possible. These arrangements having been made, La Vallette visited each post with his staff, exhorted all to do their duty manfully, and by the calm intrepidity of his manner inspired all with enthusiastic devotion to himself and to the cause which he was about so heroically to defend. The aid of religion was also invoked The chaplains of the Order vied with each other in their efforts to keep alive the enthusiasm of the troops; and a day having been set apart for special prayer and humiliation, all the members of the fraternity assembled in the church of San Lorenzo, and after receiving absolution, consecrated their weapons to the preservation of their faith, their Order, and their home.

At daybreak, on the 18th of May, 1565, the long-expected Ottoman fleet appeared off the coast of Malta. It consisted of one hundred and thirty-eight vessels, well manned, and completely armed. Bosio estimates the number of fighting men on board at thirty-eight thousand three hundred, and says that the fleet carried fifty field-pieces, besides two large guns used for throwing immense stone balls. This was a formidable force compared with that under the command of La Vallette. Many a man of undoubted military skill and of unquestionable bravery would have felt his heart sink within him at the prospect of contending against such overwhelming numbers. But the Grand Master betrayed no fear. His courage rose with the occasion, and his orders were given with the calmness and precision which betokened a truly great mind, and military ability equal to the most pressing emergency.

The chief pilot of the Turkish fleet sailed about half a mile in advance of the rest of the fleet, and anxiously looked out for a creek or harbour in which he might anchor in safety. He made an attempt to enter Marsascirocco, on the south-east of

the island; but the wind proving unfavourable, he passed on with the whole fleet astern of him along the south side of the island, and about sunset came to an anchor at Migiarro, in the island of Gozo. Five-and-thirty galleys, however, belonging to the rear-guard, were detached from the main body, and landed about three thousand men in the little creek of St. Thomas.

Some skirmishing took place between the Turks and the advanced guard of the knights under Marshal Coppier, after which the Turkish general advanced cautiously into the interior with a view to reconnoitre, and to determine on a plan of operations. At the council of war which was held a day or two after, Admiral Piali was of opinion that nothing should be done until the arrival of Dragut. The general, however, had heard from one of the knights whom the Turks had wounded and taken prisoner, that succours were hourly expected from Sicily and from the Continent. He therefore maintained that whatever was to be done should be done quickly; and, as it was considered that Fort St. Elmo, on the extremity of Mount Sceberras, between the two harbours, might easily be taken in five or six days, he determined to commence the siege of that fort without delay. Mustafà had yet to learn by bitter experience that the foe he had to deal with was no ordinary foe; and that the defence of a fortress depends less on the strength of its walls and on the range of its guns than on the hearts and hands of its defenders.

The St. Elmo of those days was a very different structure from the terrible fortress bristling with cannon which now stands on its site. It is described by Colonel Porter as being in the "form of a star, consisting of four salients. The land front was broken into a bastioned form by the addition of small rounded flanks, and on the sea-side arose a cavalier which dominated over the remainder of the work." The capture of this small and insignificant castle occupied the immense

Turkish forces more than a month, and cost the besiegers thousands of lives.

As soon as the Turkish general had formed his plans, he began to construct trenches and batteries on the side of Mount Sceberras, which overlooks the harbour of Marsamuscetto; and on the 24th of May he opened fire on the fortress from a battery of ten guns. The fire was returned by the besieged with great energy, but the heavy artillery of the Turks told fearfully on the walls of the fortress, and soon opened several breaches. D'Eguerras began to be alarmed for the consequences, and as the communication between him and the Grand Master across the Great Harbour was open, he sent the Spanish knight La Cerda to request a reinforcement; and La Cerda, whose fear made him eloquent, greatly exaggerated the danger of the besieged garrison.

The Grand Master received the message with feigned surprise and with real indignation. "What loss," he angrily exclaimed, "have you sustained that you cry out so soon for succours?" "Sir," said the knight, "the castle may be likened to a sick man who is sinking for want of cordials." "Then I myself," replied the Grand Master, "will be the physician, and I will take others with me who, if they cannot cure you of your fear, shall at least prevent the infidels from taking the castle." The reader hardly needs to be told that the cowardice displayed on this occasion by La Cerda was rarely, if ever, displayed by any one who had the honour of being enrolled amongst the gallant Knights of St. John.*

* Vertot and Bercastel deliberately charge La Cerda with cowardice, and state that after the siege of St. Elmo he was imprisoned by the Grand Master for his dastardly conduct. Dr. Vassallo declares the charge untrue, and gives La Cerda credit for valour displayed (as he says) afterwards in the various actions at Senglea; but upon what foundation Dr. Vassallo grounds his defence of La Cerda I have not been able to discover; and as Vertot was himself a member of the Order, his statements are entitled to credit. I have, therefore, adopted Vertot's account as substantially correct.

The Grand Master knew too well the power of the besiegers and the weakness of the garrison of St. Elmo to imagine that any lengthened resistance could be made, but the craven fear shown by La Cerda was intolerable to a man of his intrepid spirit; and he was, moreover, displeased at this confession of weakness being made in the presence of the Council, instead of being reserved for his own ear.

He clung, besides, to the hope that St. Elmo would hold out until succours should arrive from Sicily, and he was resolved to risk everything rather than permit a hasty capitulation of the fortress, which would enable the Turks to attack the Borgo and the Castle of St. Angelo, the last stronghold of the Order. That he might enable the besieged to prolong their resistance as much as possible, he despatched two hundred men and fifty knights, under the command of the Chevalier de Medrano, to reinforce the garrison.

De Medrano had no sooner arrived in the fort than he headed a sally into the Turkish trenches, and succeeded in cutting down a large number of the besiegers; but the Turks, recovering from their surprise, rallied in great numbers, and after an obstinate engagement, retook their trenches, and drove the attacking party back into the fort. Unhappily for the knights, a strong wind blew the smoke from the guns back in the direction of the fort, and under cover of it the besiegers effected a lodgment on the counterscarp, which they succeeded in retaining, and which materially assisted them in their efforts to reduce the fort.

Whilst the garrison was thus alternately elated by hope and depressed by fear, Dragut arrived on the spot with eighteen ships containing sixteen hundred men. He at once declared that the siege of St. Elmo ought never to have been undertaken, but maintained that, as it had been commenced, it would not be prudent to retire until the fort had been captured. He therefore urged on the siege, and by his orders a battery was

erected on the point of land opposite to St. Elmo on which Fort Tigné now stands. This point has ever since been known as Cape Dragut.

The position of the besieged now became more and more critical every hour. The firing from the batteries on Mount Sceberras and on Cape Dragut was incessant, and the number of the wounded was becoming alarmingly great. The aged De Broglio, and his adjutant D'Eguerras, were indefatigable in their exertions to keep up the spirits of their troops. Those who were dangerously wounded were removed by night to the Borgo, and new men were sent to supply their place; but, notwithstanding these constant reinforcements, it was evident that resistance would soon become impossible. At last it was resolved to send a deputation to the Grand Master, requesting of him permission to surrender. The person selected to make this request was the knight De Medrano, who could not be suspected of cowardice, and whom nothing but sheer necessity would have driven to surrender. He told the Grand Master plainly that in his opinion the fort was no longer tenable, and that to insist on its being held would be to doom the small remnant of the garrison to utter destruction.

The reply of the Grand Master was that the fort must be held for some time longer at all hazards; that the fate of the island, perhaps of the Order, depended on the defence of St. Elmo being prolonged until succours should arrive from Sicily; that he would continue to send reinforcements so long as he was able; and that he was resolved, if necessary, to join the garrison himself, and rather than surrender, to die cheerfully with his brave companions in arms.

When this answer was reported to the garrison, the elder knights received it without a murmur, but the younger broke out into open mutiny, and declared that they would not obey the Grand Master's harsh and cruel mandate. A letter, signed by fifty-three of them, was despatched to La Vallette, in

which they declared that if he did not send boats to enable them to leave the fort the very next night, they would sally into the enemy's trenches and there die, sword in hand, rather than stay where they were, to be buried under the ruins of the crumbling fort.

The Grand Master received this letter with feelings of great grief, but he was careful to suppress his sorrow and alarm at the spirit of insubordination which it betokened. Three commissioners were sent at once to ascertain the exact state of affairs, and on their return two of them frankly told La Vallette that they were of opinion that the fort could hold out no longer. The third, however, expressed a different opinion, and actually volunteered to return and take part in the defence, if he were permitted to collect a sufficient number of followers. There was probably more of courage than of cool judgment in this proposal, but as the Grand Master was under an absolute necessity of prolonging the siege at all risks, he accepted the offer.

Volunteers were enlisted in great numbers; indeed, every one seemed anxious to be reckoned amongst the members of this forlorn hope. La Vallette's end was now gained, and, assuming an air of great dignity, he wrote to the malcontents within the fort, informing them that he was ready to give them their discharge; that for one knight who seemed to despair of holding out any longer, ten brave soldiers offered themselves, who were inspired with a true spirit of zeal and courage, and eagerly sought to obtain leave to throw themselves into the fort; that he would immediately send a new garrison to relieve them; that they had no more to do than to deliver up their posts to the officers who commanded the relief; and that they might return to the town in the boats in which the others were conveyed to the fort.

The receipt of this letter filled the malcontents with dismay. Events had taken a turn which they had not in the least

anticipated. They could not bear the thought of yielding to others the post of honour. An honourable death, they felt, would be preferable to the life of misery which awaited them if they retired from the defence of the fort at such a crisis and under such circumstances. Then, rushing from the extreme of despair to the extreme of enthusiasm, they determined unanimously that they would lose their lives rather than give up their posts to new soldiers, or abandon the fort to the enemy. They were only afraid lest they should be put to shame by the arrival of the boats with the relief; and, selecting one of their number, who was an excellent swimmer, they sent him across the harbour with a letter full of expressions of contrition for the past and of stern resolution for the future. They begged pardon for their fault, and asked leave to blot it out by dying on the ramparts of the fort. This repentance was just what the Grand Master wished to bring about. The new levies were dismissed, and the defence of the fort was carried on by the diminished garrison more vigorously than ever.

The 16th of June was appointed by the Turkish commander-in-chief for a general assault. At daybreak the galleys were drawn up opposite the fort, and commenced a furious cannonading against the walls facing the sea. At the same time a large battery of thirty-six heavy guns battered to pieces all the fortifications that had been left standing on the land side. Suddenly a gun was fired as a signal for the assault. Four thousand marksmen lined the trenches, and kept up a continual fire against those who ventured to approach the breach. The garrison behaved most nobly. The knights mingled everywhere with the soldiers, exhorted them to do their duty manfully, and set them a noble example of self-devotion. These brave warriors, pike in hand, formed a wall that was proof against all the efforts of the enemy. Swords and pikes were crossed in deadly combat, the cannon of the batteries and the musketry of the soldiers on both sides kept up an incessant

roar, burning hoops were thrown from the ramparts into the ranks of the attacking party, and most of those who were caught in them were burned alive. The cries of the combatants, the groans of the wounded and dying, rose high in the air, and spread terror on all sides; the breach made in the fort by the Turkish artillery grew every moment larger and larger, and yet the staunch defenders of the fort would not yield an inch of ground. Each knight, as he came to the front, was either killed or mortally wounded, and was succeeded by another with truly heroic constancy. Meanwhile the Grand Master, from his position on the other side of the harbour, was an anxious spectator of the fight; and from time to time, when an opportunity presented itself, he fired on the besiegers from the batteries of Fort St. Angelo.

Whilst the knights were thus successfully defending the fort at one point, several attempts were made by the Turks to force an entrance at other points by means of scaling-ladders; but they were everywhere driven back. At last, when the fight had been prolonged for six hours, when the knights were beginning to be exhausted by the loss of blood from their wounds, and the fierce rays of the mid-day sun had made their position one of the most intense suffering, they had the satisfaction of seeing the Turks retire from the attack. Upon this they set up a general shout of rejoicing, which was heard by their brethren in arms at the Borgo, and enthusiastically answered. No one had ventured to hope that the fort would hold out against such formidable enemies. From this moment nothing seemed impossible to the valiant knights. The joy which this success inspired was, however, damped by the recollection that about three hundred brave men, of whom seventeen were knights, had been killed on the ramparts. Amongst the slain was the gallant Chevalier de Medrano, who had just wrested a standard out of the hands of a Turkish officer, when he was killed by a musket shot. The besiegers had

lost at least two thousand men, whose corpses lay piled together in the trenches beneath the fort.

It was now clear to the Turkish general that unless the communication between the Grand Master and Fort St. Elmo could be intercepted, and the transport of reinforcements thereby prevented, he could not hope to reduce the fort. It was proposed, therefore, that a battery should be constructed on the Great Harbour slope of Mount Sceberras. This battery would of course be exposed to the fire of the guns from Fort St. Angelo and the Borgo, but it was absolutely necessary that it should be erected. Dragut undertook to superintend the work, and whilst so employed was struck on the head by a splinter, the effect of a shot from one of the Grand Master's guns. The construction of the battery, however, proceeded, and in the course of a few days Fort St. Elmo was invested on all sides, so that no boat could come near it without being immediately either intercepted or sunk.

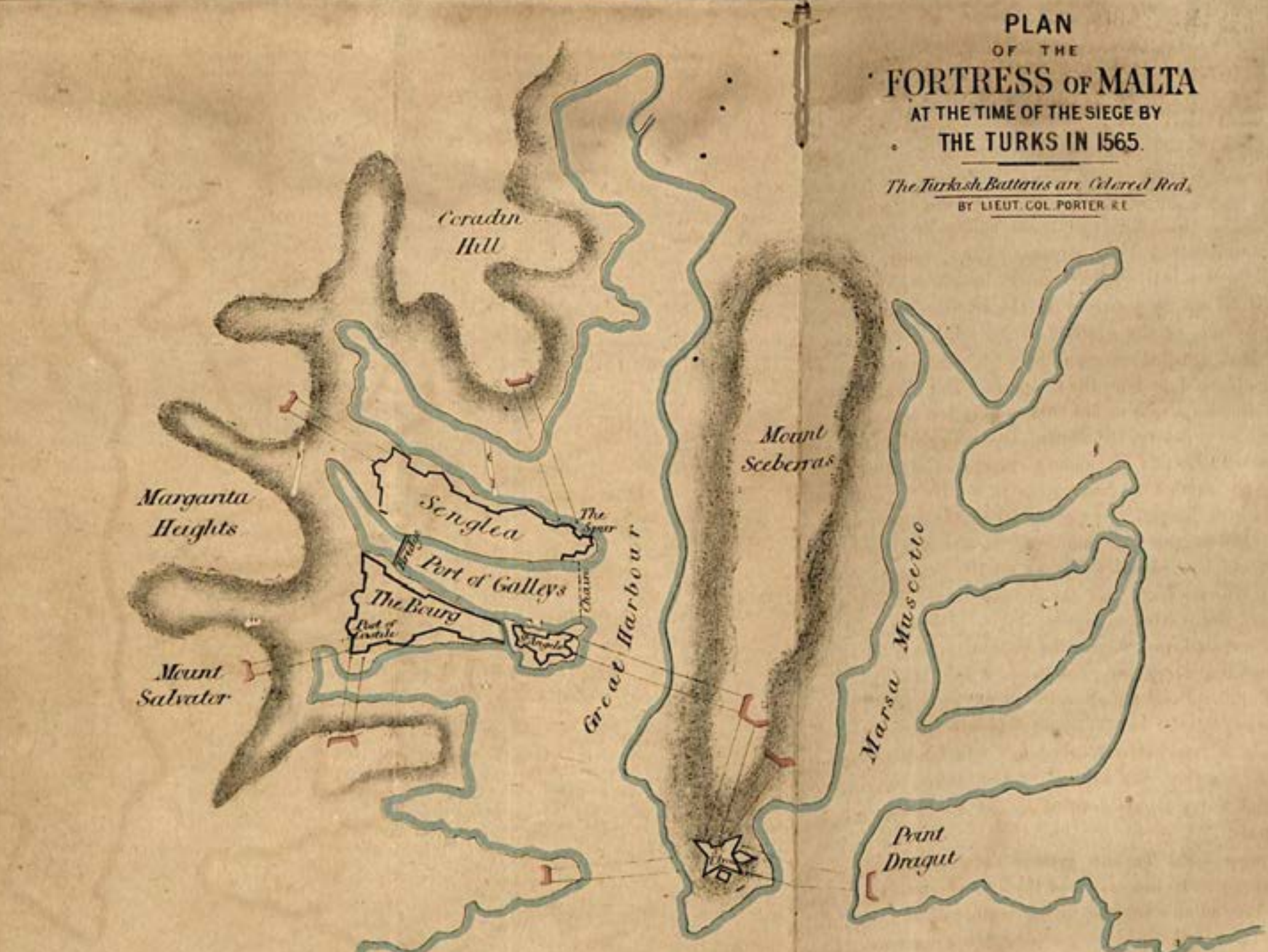
The Grand Master now saw plainly that all hope was at an end. On the 21st of June another assault was made. The Turkish general poured his men into the trenches in overwhelming numbers, but still they were repulsed. Three times they rushed to the attack, and three times they were forced to retire; and when night came on, the little band of heroes still held possession of the citadel. It was evident to all, however, that they could not hope to retain their position any longer. Each one felt that the coming night would be his last; and each strove to spend it with becoming solemnity. Assembling in their little chapel, they confessed their sins, and partook of the Holy Communion in the spirit of men who had done with the world and all its concerns.

Early on the morning of the 22nd of June the Turks came on to the assault with great shouts, as if they were going to certain victory. But the knights had determined not to yield until resistance was absolutely impossible. They had sworn to

PLAN
OF THE
FORTRESS OF MALTA
AT THE TIME OF THE SIEGE BY
THE TURKS IN 1565.

The Turkish Batteries are Colored Red.

BY LIEUT. COL. PORTER R.E.



die sword in hand, and to sell their lives dearly." Those who were not able to walk on account of their wounds were carried in chairs to the side of the breach, where, armed with swords which through weakness they could hardly lift, they awaited with heroic resolution the advance of the enemy. For four long hours the battle raged, and at length only sixty men remained to oppose a barrier to the immense Moslem force. The commander of the garrison, seeing that the fatal moment had arrived, recalled some of the soldiers who till then had held an advanced post on the ramparts. The Turkish general on this sounded a retreat, but only to rally his janissaries, and make one more determined effort. The besieged employed the time afforded by this momentary suspension of hostilities in dressing one another's wounds, so as to be able to continue the contest a little longer. At eleven o'clock the final assault was made. One knight after another fell; and it was only when the last knight had fallen lifeless on the ramparts that the haughty Mustafà could call the fort his own. The survivors were very few. Nine men were taken prisoners, and their lives were spared, probably in the hope of getting information from them respecting the arrangements made for the defence of the Borgo. Besides these, a few expert swimmers contrived to get away at the last moment, and arrived safely at the other side of the harbour. The fort was taken on the eve of St. John's Day, the festival of the patron saint of the Order, and a day always devoted by the knights to religious observances.

The rage of the Turkish general knew no bounds at the recollection that he had sacrificed the lives of about eight thousand of the Sultan's subjects in the capture of an insignificant fort. Haughty and cruel by nature, delighting in scenes of blood, and ever vindictive to his foes, he was guilty on this occasion of one of the most barbarous acts ever recorded in the pages of history. He ordered search to be made for the bodies of the

knights, and when they were brought to him, he commanded that they should be ripped open and their hearts plucked out. Not content with this unexampled piece of barbarity, he resolved to offer a public insult to the Cross, as the badge of the Order of St. John and the symbol of the Christian faith; and with this intention he commanded that a gash in the form of a cross should be made on the breast of each corpse. Then, after being tied to planks, the bodies were thrown into the sea, and were carried by the current, thus bleeding and mutilated, to the very foot of the Castle of St. Angelo.

La Vallette, stern as was his nature, shed tears at the sad spectacle, and being determined to teach the Turkish general a salutary lesson, he commanded that all the Turkish prisoners in his possession should be instantly beheaded, and ramming their bleeding heads into the guns on his ramparts, he fired them into the very midst of the enemy's camp.

Dragut, who had ever since his arrival directed all the operations of the siege, had, as I have remarked above, received a mortal wound when engaged in superintending the erection of the new batteries. He lingered till the fort had been captured, and then expired, leaving behind him a reputation for skill and valour which few of his contemporaries were able to rival. Vertot says of him, after recording his death :— "He was a captain of exquisite valour, and more humane than corsairs generally are."

Immediately after the capture of Fort St. Elmo, the Turkish fleet entered the Marsamuscetto Harbour in triumph, amidst the firing of cannon, the sound of martial music, and the shouts of the soldiery.

The Turkish general flattered himself that the loss of Fort St. Elmo had so dispirited La Vallette and his companions in arms that they would easily be induced to listen to terms of capitulation. He had with him a Christian slave, who was serving in his army as an interpreter, and this slave he

despatched to the Grand Master with an offer of favourable conditions if he would agree to surrender the island and cease all further resistance. As soon as La Vallette heard the message, he publicly ordered the slave to be hanged, giving, however, private orders that the sentence should not be carried out. The knight who had charge of the slave then led him round the town, through several files of soldiers under arms; and when he had brought him to the counterscarp, he showed him the bulwarks and bastions of the tower, and directing his attention particularly to the ditch, which was very deep, "See there," said he, "the only spot we can afford to give your master, and we reserve it to bury him in it with all his janissaries."

Mustafà perceived plainly by this intrepid answer, that if he would obtain possession of the island, he must obtain it by force of arms, and he at once prepared to invest the Castle of St. Angelo, the Borgo, and the peninsula of Senglea.

The Turkish troops took up their position on the hill of Coradino, which overlooks the Great Harbour, and extended themselves along the heights above the Borgo to Mount Salvador, near the entrance to the harbour, where the general fixed his own quarters. Whilst the Turks were busied in carrying on these works, the garrison of the Borgo was reinforced by Colonel Robles, with a detachment consisting of forty knights and seven hundred soldiers. Five companies were also drawn from the Città Notabile, where their presence was no longer necessary, and added to the force under the command of the Grand Master in the Borgo.

Senglea was the weakest part of the line of defence; against it the Turks, therefore, directed all their efforts. Several batteries were erected on Mount Sceberras, which played continually on La Vallette's works, and the hill of Coradino was very strongly entrenched. The besieged were now shut up on all sides, except towards the mouth of the harbour and the sea.

In order to cut off this communication, which might be of service to them in introducing succours, it was resolved to attack the great spur on the point of the peninsula of Senglea. For the execution of this project, boats in large numbers and well manned were required; and it was impossible for the boats to enter the harbour and pass the Castle of St. Angelo without running imminent risk of being destroyed by the guns of the castle, so that the design would have been abandoned if the Turkish admiral had not hit upon a clever expedient. This was to draw the boats which were lying in the Marsamuscetto across the neck of land which separates the two harbours, and to launch them in that part of the Great Harbour now called the Marsa. As the Grand Master had no reason to apprehend such a manœuvre, and could not believe it possible that any boats would approach his works except by forcing the entrance to the harbour, the Turkish admiral must have succeeded in obtaining possession of the spur at Senglea if a fortunate circumstance had not occurred to put him on his guard.

There was in the Turkish army an officer named Lascaris, who had been born of Christian parents, and had received Christian baptism, but who, having been carried into slavery when still a child, had been brought up in the Mohammedan religion. Anxious to escape from the Moslem ranks, and to return to the profession of the Christian faith, he contrived at great personal risk to desert to the Borgo, and seeking for an interview with the Grand Master, he made him acquainted with all Mustafà's plans. The Grand Master, who was fully alive to the importance of the information which Lascaris had given, commended him highly, and settled a large pension upon him. During the whole time that the siege lasted, Lascaris was of great service to the knights from his intimate knowledge of the enemy's resources, and materially aided the cause of the Order by his bravery.

La Vallette was at first struck with the boldness and origi-

nality of the Turkish admiral's design; but recovering from his surprise, he set to work energetically to endeavour to defeat it. The walls of the fortifications at Senglea were low, and might be easily scaled. It was therefore proposed to construct around the point, and across to the rock of Coradino, a strong palisading by driving piles into the sea. The superintendence of this work was entrusted to two Maltese pilots, and it was executed in a marvellously short time by Maltese divers. As the Turkish artillery on Mount Sceberras would not allow this work to be carried on by day, it had to be done by night; and in nine nights, to the astonishment of every one, it was completed.

Mustafà was strangely surprised to behold the piles suddenly spring up, as it were, out of the sea, to oppose the passage of his boats and the landing of his troops; but being a man not easily daunted, he determined to try and overcome this unforeseen obstacle. For this purpose he selected several of his men who were expert swimmers, tied axes to their girdles, and sent them across the harbour to open a passage through the palisading sufficiently large to admit his flotilla of boats. This, however, could not be done without noise, and the instant the strokes of the axes were heard by the garrison, a shower of bullets fell amongst them. Still they persevered; upon which several Maltese sprang into the water, holding their swords between their teeth, swam to the palisading, and engaged in deadly conflict with the Turkish swimmers. After an obstinate fight on both sides, the Maltese succeeded in their object, many of the Turks were killed, and the rest were pursued across the harbour until they reached the opposite shore. The next night another attempt was made. The Turks managed to tie some cables to the piles, and then endeavoured to wrench them out by the aid of the capstans in their ships, which they had fixed for the purpose on the shore. This attempt also failed. Several Maltese threw themselves into the water and cut the cables.

On the 5th of July the Turkish general opened fire on Senglea from all his batteries. Hassan, Viceroy of Algiers, arrived about this time at the camp with 2,500 men, all resolute old soldiers, whose whole lives had been spent amidst the horrors of war. When he saw Fort St. Elmo, and learned that it had taken Mustafà a whole month to get possession of it, and that he had sacrificed an incredible number of his men in the siege of so insignificant a fort, he exclaimed:—"If I and my soldiers had been present, there would have been a very different story told." Hassan was the son-in-law of Dragut, and, like him, a brave and skilful chief. His father was the celebrated Barbarossa, and he was anxious to leave to posterity a name as illustrious as those of his father and father-in-law. He therefore requested of Mustafà permission to lead the assault on the battery of St. Michael, boasting that he would carry it sword in hand. Mustafà, who was an old soldier, and who knew how terrible was the foe with whom he was now contending, was pleased at the thought of giving Hassan a taste of what he had himself undergone in the reduction of Fort St. Elmo. He accordingly replied that his request should be granted; and, in order that he might be able to attack the battery both by sea and land, he gave him six thousand men, assuring him at the same time that he would support him on the land side at the head of all his troops.

Hassan entrusted the duty of making the attack on the sea-side to Candelissa, his lieutenant. Candelissa was a Greek renegade, and an old corsair, of a cruel and bloody disposition, but an excellent seaman, having spent all his life under Barbarossa. Hassan himself undertook to lead the troops who were to attack the fort by land.

To prepare for this double attack, the Turks for several days together kept up a continual fire on La Vallette's works; and all the arrangements having been completed, it was resolved to make a general assault at daybreak on the 15th of July.

The day was an eventful one, and the slaughter on both sides very great. At the appointed moment, whilst the Turks were endeavouring to force their way into the fort through the breach made by their guns, an immense number of boats, containing about four thousand men, under the command of Candelissa, made directly for the palisade, which they vainly imagined they could force. The flotilla was preceded by a barque full of Moslem priests and dervishes, some of whom loudly implored the assistance of the Almighty, whilst others read out of books, which they held in their hands, curses and imprecations against the Christians.

This was immediately followed by the clash of arms and the roar of guns. Candelissa's intention was to break through the palisade, and if he could not do this, to climb over it, lay planks from the top of it to the opposite shore, and thus form a bridge to land his men. But all his calculations proved erroneous. The palisade was too well constructed to be forced, and the planks were too short to reach the shore; and when he attempted to break the chain or cut the sail-yards which fastened the piles, he and his men were overwhelmed with bullets from the fort; and the guns from St. Angelo, being fired upon them at the same time, sank many of his boats and dispersed the rest.

Candelissa, however, soon rallied the boats, and endeavoured to land on the extremity of the point of Senglea. This point was defended by a battery of six guns, playing on a level with the water; and the command of the battery was entrusted to the Chevalier de Guimeran. He suffered the enemy's boats to approach the shore, and as soon as they came within range, he opened such a fire upon them that several of them sank, and about four hundred of the Turks perished.

Candelissa was inured to scenes like these, and was not a man to be daunted. Taking advantage of the few minutes required by De Guimeran's men to reload their guns, he dashed

towards the point and landed. Here, however, he encountered new perils. De Guimeran had in reserve two guns loaded with grape-shot, which he now poured upon the Turks. Many of them fell, but their intrepid leader continued to urge them on. Many drew back and tried to get into the boats again with a view to escape, upon which Candelissa, to cut off all hope of retreat, ordered the sailors to push off with the boats. This was telling his soldiers plainly that they must either conquer or die. Despair inspired them with fresh courage; those who were in front endeavoured, with a sabre in one hand and a ladder in the other, to scale the entrenchment. All strove to be first at the top of the wall, and pressed forwards with a generous contempt of death. For five hours the battle raged, the slaughter was fearful, the blood flowed in streams, and at last the Turks succeeded in gaining the summit of the wall, on which, in token of victory, they planted seven ensigns.

At the sight of these standards the knights, although reduced to a small number, were ashamed of having retreated, and again turned about and faced the enemy. Again they closed with the Turks, and fought desperately, hand to hand; again the Turks were beginning to drive them from the ramparts, when the Grand Master, whose vigilance extended to every scene of action, sent the Commander de Giou with a party of men to their assistance. Advancing at the head of his men, De Giou charged the infidels, tore down the standards with his own hands, and forced them over the rampart. Many threw themselves over the wall to escape the swords of the soldiers, and Candelissa, who had up to this time done his duty bravely, was seized with fear, and being alarmed lest he should fall into the hands of the knights, who gave no quarter, he ordered the immediate return of the boats. When they returned he was the first to leap in and make his escape from the scene of conflict. His own soldiers were ashamed of

him, and called him a Greek traitor. Those who could not succeed in reaching the boats were cut to pieces, the knights refusing quarter, and exclaiming that they would now be revenged for the loss of St. Elmo. The rocks at the base of the battery were covered with dead bodies, with heads, arms, and mangled limbs. A more dreadful spectacle could hardly be imagined. Four thousand men had started on this expedition, and of these hardly five hundred survived, most of whom were badly wounded.

Meanwhile, Hassan had attacked the entrenchments on the land side, and had been repulsed. Again and again he led on his brave Algerines to the assault, and each time he was compelled to retreat before the steady fire and undaunted courage of his foes. At the close of the day Hassan had considerably modified his opinion respecting the conduct of Mustafà at the siege of St. Elmo, and was obliged to acknowledge that with such defenders the capture of the island was all but impossible.

The loss of the garrison amounted to forty knights and about two hundred soldiers—a loss which was trifling indeed when compared with that of the besiegers, but which was great when the smallness of the garrison was considered, and the distance to which the line of defence extended. Amongst the slain were the Chevalier de Polastron and Henry de la Vallette, the Grand Master's nephew.

The Grand Master bore the death of his nephew with great firmness. When some of the elder knights went to condole with him on his loss, he assured them that all the knights were equally dear to him, that he regarded them all as his children, adding—"after all, they have only got the start of us for some days; for if the Sicilian succours do not arrive there will be no possibility of saving Malta; we must all die to a man, and be buried beneath the ruin of our fortresses." When one of the commanders said that a deserter had informed him that it was the intention of the Turkish general, if he took the island, to

put all the knights to the sword and to reserve the Grand Master to present to the Sultan, "I shall take care," said La Vallette, "to disappoint him. If the result of the siege be unfavourable to us, rather than be carried in chains to Constantinople, I will put on the uniform of a private soldier and die in the midst of my children and my brethren."

The siege grew more and more bloody every day. The Turks did not allow the besieged a moment's rest. Sometimes they assaulted a single place, sometimes they attacked several points at the same time. Nothing was omitted which the fatal science of war had invented for the taking of fortresses; but every attempt, however well planned, and however courageously carried out, was baffled by the valour of the knights. Their presence on the breach, and their almost superhuman intrepidity, supplied the place of the strongest bastions.

In this dreadful state of affairs, La Vallette wrote to the Viceroy of Sicily, to represent the great need he had of speedy succours, informing him that the fortifications of the island were entirely ruined; that he had lost on different occasions the flower of his knights, who had rushed fearless into danger; that most of those who survived were shut up in the infirmary; that the enemy was strongly entrenched before the walls; and that he conjured him, in consideration of the great distress he was in, without either fortifications or troops, to despatch at least the two galleys of the Order which lay in the port of Messina, with the knights who had come thither from the distant possessions of the Order. He concluded his letter with the observation, that it was not just to be careful of any particular limb when the whole body was exposed to utter destruction.

The Viceroy of Sicily, on the receipt of La Vallette's letter, laid the matter before the Council. The naval officers were unanimous in declaring that nothing would be easier than to land a reinforcement in Malta. The military officers were

divided in opinion. One of them, Alvarez de Sandos, a man of great valour and experience, obstinately maintained that the Viceroy was not bound to hazard the lives of his troops in an enterprise altogether hopeless; and advised that La Vallette should be exhorted to imitate the example of his great predecessor, L'Isle Adam, and to abandon Malta as L'Isle Adam had abandoned Rhodes.

Ascanio della Corna, an officer who had obtained great renown in Piedmont, affirmed, on the contrary, that to decline sending succours to the knights in their hour of peril would be to expose themselves to infamy and disgrace; that the knights had never failed to defend Naples and Sicily against the attacks of the Turks, and that they were entitled to expect help from Sicily in return. He then entered into details, and showed how the relief of the island should be accomplished, and how success was almost certain. This advice, being more generous, was adopted by the majority of the Council; and the Viceroy wrote back to the Grand Master promising to send sixteen thousand men to Malta by the end of the month, and to despatch the two galleys belonging to the Order immediately.

Delighted as La Vallette was to receive these assurances, he did not for a moment relax his vigilance. Night and day he was at his post, and when the end of August arrived, the beleaguered city still held out. The patience of the Turkish general was gradually becoming exhausted, and the Grand Master felt his position becoming every day more and more critical. Day after day he looked out from the highest bastion of Fort St. Angelo, to see whether the expected succours were approaching; and at last, when he had almost ceased to hope, his patience and his bravery were rewarded.

On the 6th of September the Sicilian fleet arrived, and entered the little bay of Melleha, in the north-west of the island. The Turks were panic-struck. They expected nothing

less than complete destruction. Without waiting to obtain accurate information respecting the strength of the reinforcement, Mustafà gavé orders for immediate embarkation. The artillery and stores were carried off, and throughout the night of the 7th September the Turkish soldiers worked hard at the removal of the guns. On the morning of the 8th the knights saw that Turkish fleet which had been pronounced invincible slowly disappear beyond the blue horizon; and once more the banner of St. John waved triumphantly over the bastions of Malta. The Maltese have ever since kept the 8th of September as a national holiday.

The events of this remarkable siege have been related most graphically and accurately by Colonel Porter, of the Royal Engineers. In his "History of the Fortress of Malta," Colonel Porter pays the following graceful tribute of praise to La Vallette and his brave companions in arms:—

"The heroic spirits who conducted the defence of Malta, through all its difficulties and all its dangers, to so glorious a conclusion have long since returned to that dust from which they sprang; the names even of but too many of them have been lost to the world; still, the memory of their great deeds remains as fresh and as green as though it were a thing of yesterday; and the name of Malta is never mentioned, even in this present age, without calling up a picture of the scenes enacted there during the summer of 1565.

"The banner of St. John no longer floats over the ramparts of the island; the fraternity itself is, if not utterly annihilated, at all events reduced to little more than a nonentity; still, there are none amongst those who now occupy their place who would refuse to yield their just tribute of admiration and applause at the heroism and endurance which had successfully sustained such mighty and protracted efforts, and had protected the home of their adoption from the polluting presence of the infidel invaders."

English hearts and English swords now protect those ramparts which formerly glistened with the ensigns of the Order of St. John; and should occasion ever demand the sacrifice, the world will find that British blood can be poured forth like water in the defence of that rock, which the common consent of Christianity has entrusted into her hands. On that day the memory of this great siege will have its due effect, and those ramparts, already watered with so much noble blood, will once again witness deeds of heroism such as shall rival, if they cannot excel, the glories of the great struggle of 1565.

CHAPTER VI.

MALTA UNDER THE KNIGHTS OF ST. JOHN.—GRAND-MASTERSHIP OF LA VALLETTE.—THE BUILDING OF THE CITY. 1565 TO 1568.

THE news of the defeat of the Turks soon spread over Christendom. All Europe rejoiced at the joyful intelligence; bonfires blazed everywhere, illuminations lit up every town, and Te Deums and psalms of praise were heard in every church. La Vallette's name was pronounced everywhere with respectful reverence, and his praises were sounded in all directions, and by men of all ranks, from the prince to the peasant.

Pius IV. and Philip, King of Spain, who were most interested in the preservation of Malta, were foremost in bestowing marks of their esteem on the gallant defender of the island. The Pope intimated his intention of making the Grand Master a cardinal, and would have done so if the honour had not been respectfully declined by him, on the ground that the two offices of cardinal and Grand Master ought to be kept quite distinct. The King of Spain sent an ambassador to present the Grand Master, in full council, with a sword and a dagger, the hilt of which was of massive gold set with diamonds; and to deliver to him an address, in which he was styled one of the greatest captains of the age, and implored to continue his exertions in defence of the Christian faith.

But in the midst of all these scenes of triumph, and whilst the congratulations of his friends were still sounding in the Grand Master's ears, he felt secretly uneasy lest the attacks of the Turkish hosts should be renewed. His spies at Constan-

tinople informed him that the warlike Sultan was extremely enraged at the ill success of Mustafà and Piali, and that he vowed to go to Malta himself the following spring at the head of an army still larger than that which had been defeated. And when La Vallette looked around him to ascertain what resistance he could make if Solyman really carried out his threat, what did he see? Ruin and desolation reigned on all sides. The country-people had abandoned their agricultural pursuits, and had taken refuge in the towns; most of the small villages and hamlets had been destroyed; the town in which the knights resided was without walls; the fortifications had been battered to pieces; Fort St. Elmo was a mass of ruins; the cisterns were without water, the stores without corn, the magazines without ammunition, and the barracks almost without soldiers. Malta in this deplorable condition appeared to La Vallette in almost as great danger as it had been during the siege.

When the Grand Master took counsel with his brethren in arms they shared his uneasiness, and advised him at once to abandon an island which had become indefensible, and to transport the Order, without delay, to Sicily. But, elated by the glory he had acquired in Malta, La Vallette would not consent to leave the island. He resolved to bury himself under its ruins rather than to desert his post; and having turned over in his mind several plans of defence, and finding each in turn impracticable, he at last hit upon an expedient to rid himself of his enemy, which nothing but the hard necessities of war and the extreme peril of his position could ever justify.

Solyman the Magnificent could not come to Malta without a fleet; and that fleet the Sultan had resolved should be large enough to be proportioned to his own dignity, and to the size of the army he had determined to land in Malta. Thousands of workmen were employed in the arsenals of Constantinople, numberless galleys and galliots were being built and fitted out,

nothing was talked of throughout the Sultan's dominions but the signal victory which was soon to be obtained over the Christians, and the dire revenge that was to fall on the devoted heads of the Knights of St. John, when in a moment, no one could tell how, the arsenal at Constantinople was set on fire, the powder in the magazines exploded, immense numbers of the artisans at work lost their lives, and all the warlike projects of Solyman were buried in the ruins under which lay his ships and his workmen. La Vallette's paid incendiaries had done their work well; and when the news of their success reached Malta the Grand Master once more breathed freely. Before the Sultan could recover from this disaster he died, and La Vallette, being now assured of peace at least from that quarter, turned his thoughts to the repair of his fortifications, and to the building of a new city. Hitherto the Città Notabile, situated on a hill in the interior of the island, had been the capital; but the Order of St. John being a naval as well as a military power, it was determined to found a city on Mount Sceberras, which commands the two ports, and which, with Fort St. Elmo at its extremity, and lofty bastions all around it, would be able to resist the most daring assaults of any enemy.

Money, of course, was necessary to the carrying out of this project, and this could only be obtained from the principal sovereigns of Christendom. Ambassadors were sent to the Pope, to the kings of Spain, Portugal, and France, and to the princes of several of the small Italian States. The Grand Master's appeal was successful. Large sums of money were sent to Malta, and with as little delay as possible the building of the city was commenced.

Pius IV. had engaged the celebrated engineer, Francesco Laparelli, to draw out the plan of the city; and on the 3rd of January, 1566, it was submitted to the Grand Master, and received his approbation. Some of the Grand Master's colleagues, however, expressed their disapproval of the plan. Long

discussions ensued, which were carried to such a length that, calling to mind all the difficulties which had been raised, a contemporary writer exclaimed, in a poor attempt to parody Virgil,—

"Tantæ molis erat Melitenses condere muros."

At last, however, a plan was decided upon and adopted, and the 28th of March was named as the day on which the first stone of the city was to be laid.

At eight o'clock in the morning La Vallette left the Borgo, preceded by the knights in solemn procession, and the ecclesiastical dignitaries of the island. On one side of him walked the Bishop, and on the other side the Prior. When the procession landed at Mount Sceberras the guns of Fort St. Elmo, which less than a year before had made such havoc amongst the Turks, poured forth a triumphant volley. Under a rich canopy stood an altar, at which high mass was said; and after this ceremony had been performed an Augustinian monk ascended a pulpit and preached an eloquent discourse, taking as his text the first verse of the 87th Psalm: "His foundation is in the holy mountains." After the sermon the vice-prior pronounced the benediction. Then several gold and silver medals, bearing on one side the effigy of the Grand Master, and on the other appropriate inscriptions,* were placed beneath the stone just before it was lowered into its place; and when, having been formally tapped with the mallet and carefully examined with the square, it was pronounced duly laid, a loud shout burst from the assembled crowd, and "Long live the great La Vallette!" was heard from thousands of voices, and was repeated with greater and ever-increasing energy until the acclamations of the multitude reached the soldiers at Fort St. Elmo, who reloaded their guns, and again rent the air with a

* On some of the medals were inscribed the words: *Immotam coli dedit.* On others, *Melita renascens.* On some David was represented slaying Goliath, the inscription on these being *Unus decem millia.*

martial salute in honour of their brave chief, and in token of joy at the anticipated glory of their new city. On the foundation-stone was engraved an inscription, a copy of which is now to be seen over the principal gate of Valletta—called Porta Reale.*

Nothing could exceed the joy of the Maltese at seeing the foundations of their new city laid. They looked forward with exultation to the time when Valletta would become the stronghold of Christianity, under the renowned Order of St John, and would bid defiance to the infidel foe that had so long threatened the peace of Christendom. A saying had been current in Malta for many centuries that the time would come

* The inscription is as follows:—"Illustrissimus et Reverendissimus D. Frater Ioannes de Valletta, Ordinis Militiæ Hospitalis Divi Ioannis Baptistæ Hierosolymitani Magnus Magister, periculorum anno superiore a suis militibus, populoque Meliteo in obsidione Tureica perpessorum memor de condenda urbe nova, eaque mœniis, arcibus, et propugnaculis ad sustinendam vim omnem propulsandosque inimici Turcæ impetus aut saltem reprimendos munienda inito cum proceribus concilio; die Jovis vigesima octava Mensis Martii MDLXVI. Deum omnipotentem Deiparamque Virginem, et numen tutelare Divum Ioannem Baptistam, Divosque ceteros multa precatus, ut faustum, felixque Religioni Christianæ fieret, ac Ordini suo quod inceptabat bene cederet; suppositis aliquot suæ notæ nummis aureis et argenteis prima urbis fundamenta in Monte ab incolis Sceberras vocato jecit, eamque de suo nomine Vallettam dato pro insignibus in parma miniata aureo leone, appellari voluit."

"The most Illustrious and most Reverend Lord, Brother John de la Vallette, Grand Master of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, both Hospitaller and Military, remembering all the perils to which his knights and the people of Malta were exposed last year during the siege by the Turks, and having with the approbation of the Council of the Order resolved to build a new town, and to fortify it with walls, citadels, and fortresses for the resisting of every attack, and for the repelling of the assaults of the Turks, or, at any rate, checking those assaults; the said Grand Master has on this day, being Thursday, the twenty-eighth of the month of March, 1566 (after having invoked Almighty God and besought the intercession of the Virgin, Mother of God, and of St. John the Baptist, tutelar patron of the Order, and other saints, to render this work successful and conducive to the promotion of the Christian faith and useful to the Order), laid the first stone of it on the mountain called by the inhabitants of the island Sceberras, having placed beneath it several gold and silver coins, and having bestowed on the city as its escutcheon his arms, which are a lion d'or in a field gules, and the new town has by his command been named *Valletta*, after the name of him its founder."

when every square foot of ground on Mount Sceberras would be worth an ounce of silver; and it now seemed as if the prediction was about to be realised. The labourers worked away with hearty good-will at the tasks allotted to them, whilst the Grand Master and his knights never for a moment relaxed their vigilance. Under such active superintendence the work progressed rapidly. Every Saturday the workmen were paid in what was called "black money." This consisted of brass and copper coins, which had been manufactured to meet the necessity of the case, bearing on one side the arms of the Grand Master and of the Order, and on the other side the inscription, *Non æs sed fides.* Each of these coins possessed a current value, and was held as a promissory note would be—payable on demand as soon as ever the exchequer of the Order should be replenished; and to the credit of La Vallette be it said, that as remittances arrived in the island from the Continent, this spurious currency was gradually withdrawn, so that throughout the whole progress of the work public confidence was not for one moment shaken.

During the building of the city, it was necessary that every precaution should be taken against surprise and invasion. Philip, King of Spain, accordingly sent four hundred soldiers, who had been quartered in Sicily, to guard the works. Meanwhile a rumour prevailed that fresh preparations were being made at Constantinople. It was said that these preparations were on a much larger scale than had ever been made before; and nothing less than the utter destruction of the rising city was anticipated.

At this juncture, the military spirit of the Order was once more roused. Hundreds of knights poured into Malta from the several commanderies on the Continent. Amongst these noble adventurers was Alophius de Vignacourt, who was destined to play an important part in the future history of the Order. At the same time, six thousand men, under the command

of the Marquis of Pescara, landed in the island. One half of these were Spaniards, and the other half Germans. They were provisioned for six months, and were therefore for that period at least rendered independent of the resources of the Order. These six thousand troops, together with the mercenaries in the pay of the knights, the regular soldiers of the Order, the island militia, and the volunteers who had arrived from Europe, added to about five thousand labourers, gave an effective force of nearly eighteen thousand men, all more or less trained to the use of arms.

Just as this force had assembled in the island, and some anxiety was beginning to be felt as to the nature of the attack which it was supposed the Turks were contemplating, intelligence reached the Grand Master that Solyman had abandoned all idea of another expedition against Malta, and that he was preparing to lead an army into Hungary. As soon as this intelligence was confirmed, La Vallette thought it prudent to reduce the strength of his garrison. First of all, he sent back the German troops, under the command of the Marquis of Pescara, to whom he presented as a parting gift the golden vase and goblet which Henry VIII. and Queen Catherine of England had given to the Grand Master L'Isle Adam. A few days after he dismissed the Spaniards, under the command of Don Juan de Cordova. Then he disbanded the mercenaries who had been enlisted in various places on the Continent to meet the expected emergency; and these, it is said, before their departure from the island, sold their armour and their weapons to the knights, who deposited them in the Grand Master's palace, and thus formed the nucleus of that splendid collection of mediæval armour and weapons of war, which even in the present day is an object of attraction to the traveller who visits Malta.

As soon as all danger of invasion was over, and many hundreds were released from military duty, they came to the

Grand Master to offer their services as labourers, and to aid in the building of the city. Many of the labourers were Sicilians and Spaniards; and the Viceroy of Sicily gave orders that the Maltese peasants who had been employed in cultivating land on the west coast of Sicily should be sent over to their native island, to assist in building their own capital. In August, 1566, the number of labourers amounted to eight thousand; and a brief was forwarded from Rome on the 19th of that month, by which Pope Pius V. permitted the work to be carried on on Sundays, alleging that necessity, piety, and the public advantage demanded it; and calling to mind how the Maccabees had been visited with dreadful slaughter because they had refused to fight on the Sabbath-day, and how afterwards, under Divine inspiration, they had resolved that, if attacked again by the enemy on the Sabbath-day, they would fight.

It had been intended by the engineer, Laparelli, who planned the city, to form a plateau by levelling the ridge of Mount Sceberras, and upon this plateau to lay out the streets and construct the buildings; but when this plan came to be carried out, it was found so troublesome and so expensive, that the idea was abandoned, and the city was built as we now see it, on the natural inclination of the ground, with those steep hills and flights of steps which lead from the principal street to the harbour on either side, and of which Lord Byron is supposed to have said :—

> "Adieu! ye cursed streets of stairs,
> How surely he who mounts you swears!"

The principal street, which runs along the top of the ridge, and which is now called Strada Reale, was then called Strada San Giorgio. Parallel with it ran seven other streets, named Strada San Luigi, San Pietro, San Paolo, San Giacomo, San Giovanni Battista, San Sebastiano, and San Michele. At right angles to these ran twelve streets named Strada del Palazzo, Pia, Di Monte, Vittoria, Del Salvatore, Del Popolo, Della

Fontana, Di San Marco, Di San Pantaleone, Della Fortuna, Di Sant' Elmo, and Di San Simone.*

The work progressed rapidly through the whole of the year 1567. The natives of the island were not backward in contributing to the new city. An ordinance passed by the Council, composed of the representatives of the Maltese people, empowered the Grand Master to levy a tax on all grain and wine imported into the island, and the proceeds of this tax were devoted to the building of the city of Valletta.

La Vallette had laid the foundation-stone of the city, which has ever since been called after his name: he was not destined to see the completion of it. His end was hastened by an unfortunate quarrel with the Pope.

Several of the cardinals, coveting the vast estates which the Order of St. John possessed in Italy, had persuaded several successive Popes that the appointment to the office of Grand Prior of the Order at Rome of right belonged to them; and as each

* Several of these names have since been changed. For the information of those who have resided in Valletta, I subjoin a list of the present names of the streets, together with the old names:—

OLD NAME.	PRESENT NAME.
Strada San Giorgio.	Strada Reale.
„ San Luigi.	„ Levante.
„ San Pietro.	„ Sant' Ursola.
„ San Paolo.	Unchanged.
„ San Giacomo.	Strada Mercanti.
„ San Giovanni Battista.	„ Forni
„ San Sebastiano.	„ Zecca.
„ San Michele.	„ Ponente.
„ Del Palazzo.	„ Mezzodì.
„ Pia.	„ Britannica.
„ Di Monte.	„ San Giovanni.
„ Vittoria.	„ Santa Lucia.
„ Del Salvatore.	„ Teatro.
„ Del Popolo.	„ Vescovo.
„ Della Fontana.	„ San Cristoforo.
„ Di San Marco.	„ San Domenico.
„ Di San Pantaleone.	„ San Nicola.
„ Della Fortuna.	„ Ospedale.
„ Di Sant' Elmo.	„ Tramontana.
„ Di San Simone.	„ Il Nuovo Bastione.

appointment to the office was made, the Grand Masters had quietly acquiesced in it, and had apparently never dreamed of resistance to the Papal authority. But La Vallette's attachment to his Order was greater than his reverence for the Supreme Pontiff. He wrote to Pope Pius V. in very decided terms on his right to appoint the Grand Prior. After the raising of the siege he received from the Pope several briefs full of pompous declarations of his esteem, and expressions of the deep sense he entertained of his services. La Vallette answered that he desired no other proof of the Pope's esteem than that he should be permitted to appoint one of his own friends to the Grand Priory of Rome whenever it became vacant. Pius V. assured him, in reply, that he would not interfere with his rights. And yet when Cardinal Salviati, the Grand Prior, died shortly after, the Pope at once appointed his own nephew, Cardinal Alexandrino, to the office, and exempted him from the payment of the usual fees into the treasury of the Order.

Vertot says that "the Grand Master was sensibly concerned at this breach of promise, especially in a Pope who was still holier by the purity of his morals and his eminent piety than by his dignity;" and doubtless La Vallette might have been excused for expecting that the Chief Pastor of the Church, as he claimed to be, would keep a solemn promise. Smarting under the indignity to which he was subjected, he wrote to the Pope in very warm language.

Chevalier de Cambian was despatched to Rome as La Vallette's ambassador; but the ambassador was as incautious in his language as the letter of which he was the bearer was unguarded in its terms, and the temper of the Pontiff was so ruffled that he would listen to nothing. Cambian returned to Malta, announced the failure of his undertaking, and left the Grand Master in a fit of melancholy from which he never recovered.

A few days after Cambian's return from Rome, La Vallette went to St. Paul's Bay to amuse himself with hawking, a recreation of which he was extremely fond. The weather was oppressively hot. The fierce rays of the July sun, acting on an enfeebled constitution, brought on a feverish attack, and at the end of three weeks he expired, having throughout his illness retained his consciousness, and exhibited to the last the vigour of mind for which he had been so remarkable all through life. He died on the 21st of August, 1568. His body was laid in the Church of San Lorenzo till such time as it could be moved into the cathedral which was about to be built in the new city. After the erection of St. John's Cathedral, it was deposited in the crypt, where it now lies with the bodies of several other illustrious Grand Masters. Of his character it is unnecessary for me to say anything. The incidents related in this and in the preceding chapter sufficiently display his character.* We may unhesitatingly pronounce him to have been a great man; and if we consider the times in which he lived, and the scenes amidst which he was brought up, we shall hardly fail to admit that, under more favourable circumstances, he would have been also a good man. His intrepidity, his perseverance, his zeal, his magnanimity, are worthy of remembrance. To the traveller, who from the vessel's deck looks up at the picturesque city which now adorns the summit and the slopes of Mount Sceberras, stretching down on either side to two of the most beautiful harbours in the world, I may say, as has been said of one greater and better than La Vallette:—"SI MONUMENTUM QUÆRIS CIRCUMSPICE."

* The following lines were written by Sir Oliver Starkey, and inscribed on La Vallette's monument:—

"Ille Asiæ Libiæque pavor, tutelaque quondam
Europæ, et domitis sacra per arma Getis,
Primus in hac alma quam condidit Urbe sepultus
Valletta æterno dignus honore jacet."

CHAPTER VII.

MALTA UNDER THE KNIGHTS OF ST. JOHN.—PETER DE MONTE TO JOHN DE LA CASSIÈRE. 1568 TO 1581.

PETER DE MONTE, 1568.—Two days after the death of La Vallette the Council of the Order met, and elected as Grand Master Peter de Monte, nephew of the renowned Pope Julius III. His first care was to continue and complete the building of the city of Valletta. Every effort was made to bring the work to a satisfactory conclusion, and on the 17th of March, 1571, the knights quitted their residence at Vittoriosa and established themselves in their new city, where they continued to live for the next two hundred years.

Special attention was, of course, paid to the line of fortifications erected round Valletta. Each language had a post assigned to it which was to be defended by the knights belonging to that language in case of a siege. Colonel Porter thus describes the allotment made to each:—"The land front consisted of four bastions. St. Peter, made the post of Italy; St. James, containing a cavalier which dominated over all the surrounding works, the post of France; St. John, also containing a cavalier similar to that of St. James, the post of Provence; and St. Michael, the post of Auvergne. To the right of this latter bastion, and overlooking the Marsa-muscetto, was St. Andrew's bastion, which was appropriated as the post of Spain. The line of ramparts from that point to St. Elmo, facing the Marsa Muscetto, was the German post; and that from St. Elmo to St. Peter's bastion, facing the Grand

Harbour, and completing the circle, was made by the post of Castile. St. Elmo itself was garrisoned by detachments from all the languages, as also was St. Angelo, on the other side of the harbour; the old posts of the different languages in the Bourg and Senglea being still retained by them in addition to their new lines of defence."

Each language had also a palace assigned to it called an *auberge*. All the members of the language assembled in the auberge for meals, for the purposes of consultation, and for the transaction of business. Some of the chaplains and pages of the Order generally resided in each auberge. These buildings, some of which were beautifully decorated within, passed into the possession of the British Government at the occupation of the island in the year 1800, and have since been used as Government offices or military officers' quarters, whilst some have been pulled down and other buildings erected on their site. The *Auberge de Provence* is situated in the principal street of Valletta, and is rented from Government by the Malta Union Club; the *Auberge d'Auvergne* is appropriated to the Courts of Justice; the *Auberge d'Italie* is occupied by the Civil Engineer Department; the *Auberge de Castile* is occupied by officers belonging to the garrison; the *Auberge de France* is the residence of the officer commanding the Commissariat Department; the *Auberge d'Arragon* is the residence of the Lord Bishop of Gibraltar; the *Auberge d'Angleterre* has been pulled down, and on its site a magnificent theatre has been erected; the *Auberge de Bavière** is allotted to officers of the garrison; and on the site of the *Auberge d'Allemagne* now stands the collegiate church of St. Paul, the first stone of which was laid by her late Majesty the Dowager Queen Adelaide, on the 20th

* The language of England was suppressed when at the Reformation, Henry VIII. confiscated the English commanderies. It was succeeded by the language of Bavaria. Colonel Porter thinks that there never was an Auberge d'Angleterre in Valletta; but it is quite certain that the building which a few years ago stood where the theatre now stands was always called by that name.

March, 1839. To each of these languages, moreover, a particular dignity was annexed. Provence always furnished the Great Commander; the Marshal was always taken from that of Auvergne; the language of France furnished the Grand Hospitaller; the Admiral was taken from that of Italy; the Drapier, called also the Great Conservator, was of the language of Arragon; the Turcopolier, or General of the Horse, was of the language of England until the Reformation, when the Grand Master's seneschal was invested with that dignity; the post of Grand Bailiff belonged to the language of Germany; and that of Great Chancellor to the language of Castile.

The Cathedral of St. John, which was erected by De Monte's successor, was made the conventual church in the place of the Church of San Lorenzo, which had enjoyed this pre-eminence whilst the Order resided at the Bourg. The side aisles of the cathedral were divided into chapels, one of which was appropriated to each language, and in these chapels may still be seen the tombs or the monuments of the most celebrated members of the Order.

In the beginning of the year 1570 preparations were again made for war. Lucciali, a Turkish officer of distinction, who had taken a leading part in the siege of St. Elmo, obtained the sovereignty of several towns in Northern Africa, and exerted himself in levying a body of men to assist the Sultan in his projected expedition against Cyprus, which then belonged to the Venetians. Alarm prevailed all over Europe. The Doge of Venice wrote to the Grand Master De Monte to ask for assistance, and the Pope, Pius V., solicited the aid of the King of Spain. The Grand Master at once responded to the call by placing his galleys at the disposal of the Doge, and appointing the knight St. Clement to command them.

On the 12th of May St. Clement, having received from the Grand Master special instructions in reference to the defence of Cyprus, left Malta with his fleet; but as it was considered

advisable that he should act in concert with the Spanish squadron, he sailed first to Palermo, where he hoped to fall in with the ships of his Catholic Majesty. On his arrival at Palermo he found that the Spanish fleet was not there, and was not expected for some days; and therefore, at the request of the Viceroy of Sicily, he agreed to convoy some merchant ships to the island of Maretimo, and to return to Palermo. When on his way to Maretimo, St. Clement hove to off the town of Trapani, and there learned that the commander of one of the galleys of the Order had been seized with sudden illness, had put into Trapani for medical advice, and had died there. It became necessary, therefore, to obtain from Malta the Grand Master's sanction to a new appointment, and St. Clement resolved that instead of sending a message to the Grand Master he would go himself. Dr. Vassallo says that he was influenced by other motives than a desire to promote the interests of the Order. He had obtained, it appears, at Palermo a supply of choice wines, which he was anxious to convey to Malta, and to deposit in the cellars of the auberge to which he belonged. Visions of ecstatic enjoyment flitted before him when, under the influence of the luscious wines of Sicily, he should recount the perils of his expedition in defence of Cyprus, and, with his brethren in arms, should drink confusion to the Turk. But in one brief hour all his visions were dispelled, like the morning mist under the magic touch of a Mediterranean sun. When in sight of Gozo he fell in with the squadron of his enemy, Lucciali. The Turks gave chase, and St. Clement stretched away towards Girgenti, on the southern coast of Sicily. The wind, which in the early morning had been favourable to the galleys of Malta, fell to a dead calm. A fierce conflict took place. Lucciali gained a signal victory. St. Clement contrived to get on shore in the neighbourhood of Girgenti, but his galley was seized by the enemy. Eighty of the knights were either killed or taken prisoners, all the galleys but one were captured, and

Lucciali sailed back to Algiers, bringing his booty and his prisoners with him; and as a token of his victory, a statue of John the Baptist, which had been the figure-head of St. Clement's ship, was placed in derision over the Gate of Hassan, one of the principal entrances to the city of Algiers.

The grief of St. Clement was overwhelming. From his place of refuge in Sicily he wrote to the Grand Master, bewailing his fate, acknowledging his error, and expressing his determination to end his days as a hermit in the convent of Our Lady of Montserrat, in Spain. Well would it have been for him if he had acted upon this resolution. But instead of turning his steps towards Spain, he went to Rome. There he laid his case before the Pope and the Spanish Ambassador, who counselled him not to despair of obtaining the forgiveness of the Grand Master; and who, after furnishing him with letters, in which the Grand Master and the Council were urged to deal leniently with him, sent him back to Malta.

On the 15th of September, five months after his prosperous departure, St. Clement arrived in Malta a suppliant for mercy. His brethren in arms were disposed to receive him kindly; but as soon as his arrival became known through the city the public excitement, which had been very great at the time of his disaster, became greater than ever. A crowd assembled on the quays. Shouts of vengeance arose on all sides. His immediate death was demanded as a satisfaction for what the people regarded as a selfish and cowardly abandonment of his post in the hour of danger. Preparations were being made to board the ship in which he had arrived, and to hang him as a traitor to the yard-arm, when his friends dexterously managed to convey him away to the Castle of St. Angelo and to put him in a place of shelter. The people, however, still continued to demand satisfaction, and St. Clement was accordingly summoned before a commission, composed of knights, to meet his trial on charges of incapacity and cowardice. The commission

found him guilty, and the Council of the Order having been assembled, the unfortunate man was condemned to degradation of his office and to the forfeiture of all his goods; after which, being no longer regarded as an ecclesiastic, he was surrendered to the secular power. The civil court, before which he now appeared, also found him guilty, and pronounced sentence of death. A few days after sentence had been passed this disgraced member of a renowned Order was strangled in prison, and, his corpse having been sewed up in a sack, was carried outside of the harbour in a boat and consigned to the depths of the sea.

The expedition to Cyprus was not abandoned in consequence of the lamentable failure of St. Clement. Three galleys were despatched from Malta under the command of the Knight Giustiniani. The whole naval force of the Christian nations of Europe consisted of two hundred and sixteen galleys, commanded by Don John of Austria. The Turks, however, were everywhere successful. Nicosia, the capital of the island, fell into their hands. Another city, called Famagosta, was closely besieged. Instead, therefore, of trying to check the progress of the Turks in Cyprus, the Christian commanders resolved to make a grand attack on the Turkish fleet, which was known to be lying in the harbour of Lepanto. On the 7th October the two fleets confronted each other; and the standard of the Order of St. John having been hoisted from the imperial galley belonging to the Austrian prince, one of the most fearful, sanguinary, and obstinate battles ever recorded in the pages of history was fought. Victory declared itself on the side of Christendom; but it was victory purchased at a dreadful sacrifice of life. Of the Turks it is said 32,000 were killed or wounded, and 3,500 made prisoners. The loss on the Christian side is reckoned to have been 6,000 killed and 15,000 wounded. The whole of the Turkish ships which survived the action fell into the hands of the victors, and were distributed as follows:—

To the Pope were sent 20 galleys, 65 pieces of ordnance, and 1,200 slaves; to the King of Spain, 81 galleys, 240 pieces of ordnance, and 1,400 slaves; to the Doge and Council of Venice, 54 galleys, 122 pieces of ordnance, and 1,400 slaves; and to Don John of Austria, 16 galleys and 600 slaves, amongst whom were the two sons of Ali Pacha, the Turkish commander-in-chief.

In commemoration of this great victory a new festival was instituted by Pope Pius V. It was commanded that the first Sunday in October should be thenceforward dedicated to Our Lady of the Rosary; and the Virgin Mary had a new title added to her already numerous list in the liturgy of the Roman Church—*Auxilium Christianorum.*

About fifteen months after these events, Peter de Monte died, as Dr. Vassallo says, "full of years and merits;" but what his merits were it is difficult to ascertain. His death took place on the 27th January, 1572. He filled the office of Grand Master just three years and five months. His body was interred by the side of that of La Vallette; and, three days after his funeral, the Council elected as his successor the Grand Marshal of the Order, John Le Vesque de la Cassière, a Frenchman by birth, and chief of the *language* of Auvergne.

JOHN DE LA CASSIÈRE, 1572.—John de la Cassière had coveted the honour of being the Grand Master of the Order; but he soon discovered that if the position was one of honour, it was also one of great difficulty. His capital was almost deserted, his fleet ill provided with men and ammunition, his exchequer empty, and on all sides were rumours of another invasion by the Turks, who burned to revenge the defeat they had suffered at Lepanto. He was therefore driven to the necessity of asking the Pope to allow him to raise money by mortgaging some of the possessions of the Order, and by selling others. His request was granted by Pius V., who, however, lived but a short time after granting it. Pius was succeeded in the

month of May, 1572, by Gregory XIII., a Pontiff whose memory Protestants have reason to execrate because of his connection with the Massacre of St. Bartholomew.* De la Cassière repeated his request to the new Pope, who ratified the permission granted by his predecessor.

In order to replenish his coffers, the Grand Master tried to impose a tax on the revenues of the Bishop of Malta, who had formerly been required to pay tribute to the kings of Sicily; but the Bishop, Martin Royas, refused to pay the tax, alleging, what was perfectly true, that the Bishop and clergy of Malta had been exempted from the payment of the tax by Ferdinand II. of Spain in the year 1514, and that this exemption had received the approval of the Court of Rome. He next endeavoured to reform the discipline of the Order, which had of late become very lax, especially in the case of the younger knights; and in his attempts at reform he encountered the most vigorous opposition.

By his failure in these two experiments he increased very materially the difficulties of his position; and all through the remainder of his life he had to contend against the most determined opposition on the part of the clergy and of the young and ardent spirits who filled the junior ranks of the Order.

Peace having been made between the Sultan and the Venetians, the Turks began to turn their thoughts once more to Malta. Alarm again spread through all ranks of the Order; and Don John of Austria, who was a natural son of Charles V., at once despatched to Malta a body of two thousand soldiers, Spaniards, Germans, and Italians. To these the Order added four hundred more, levied at its own expense. But no sooner were these troops comfortably settled at Malta

* It was during the pontificate of Gregory XIII., and in the year 1572, that the Massacre of St. Bartholomew took place. A medal, bearing the effigy of Gregory XIII., was struck to commemorate the event, which the inscription on the medal describes as "Stranges Ugonottorum,"—the Massacre of the Huguenots.

than the rumours of war ceased. Confidence was restored, and with the return of confidence, the necessity for additional soldiers having ceased, they were at once withdrawn, and sent back to the Continent.

The Grand-mastership of De la Cassière was one of perpetual uneasiness and turmoil. A dispute arose between him and the Bishop; and the decision of the dispute was referred to Rome. The Grand Master was charged with having permitted and sanctioned certain acts tending to bring the Bishop and his clergy into contempt. He denied the charge. The Bishop accordingly went to Rome, hoping, by his personal influence, to move the Court of Rome against the Grand Master. His statements failed to convince the Pope; and the Grand Master, in order to justify himself completely, wrote to Rome to request that an Apostolic Legate might be sent to Malta, with full power to hear both sides and determine the matter in dispute. His request was complied with. An Inquisitor-General was despatched to Malta; the Bishop also returned, and the inhabitants of the island suddenly found themselves subject to three conflicting authorities—the Inquisitor, the Bishop, and the Grand Master. In the midst of this confusion, a General Chapter was summoned in the month of November, 1574; but nothing of any consequence was done.

The beginning of the year 1575 was marked by great commotion in the island. Vague rumours of invasion were heard. Provisions were scarce, and consequently dear; the property of the Order was about to be mortgaged in some places, and sold in others; the knights were quarrelling about precedence; the Bishop was at war with the Grand Master, and the Inquisitor at war with both; and in the midst of these unseemly contests the people were suffering from want of employment, and, in some cases, starving for want of food.

Discord at home was followed by misfortune abroad. The galley dedicated to St. Paul was seized off Sardinia by Algerine

corsairs, and the flag of the Order disgraced. Meanwhile, the Bishop, Monsignor Royas, who had paid a second visit to Rome to press his suit against De la Cassière, died. The Pope appointed as his successor Monsignor Gargallo, who had been the intimate friend of De la Cassière, but who, on his elevation to the episcopate, became his inveterate foe.

On his arrival in Malta after his consecration at Rome, Monsignor Gargallo officiated with great pomp at the opening of the Cathedral of St. John in Valletta, on the 20th February, 1578; and towards the close of the year another General Chapter was held, without, however, producing any good result. Obedience to the Grand Master had become merely nominal; and all the affairs of the Order were thrown into the most dire confusion.

One of the acts of De la Cassière deserves special mention. He banished from the island all Jews; and he included in the sentence of expulsion all women of ill-fame, as though both alike polluted the moral atmosphere.

In 1580 a serious charge was brought against the officials of the Inquisition at Malta. A Sicilian, named Impellizeri, had received sentence of perpetual banishment from the island, for some offence, real or imaginary, against the Holy Office. He naturally sought the protection of the Grand Master, and in order to induce the Grand Master to espouse his cause, promised, in return for his protection, to reveal an infamous plot which, he alleged, had been concocted by the Inquisitor-General and his subordinates. De la Cassière was to be taken off by poison, and four persons were, according to the statement of Impellizeri, entrusted with the duty of administering the poison on the first favourable opportunity. Amongst these four was the chief apothecary in the hospital of the Order. The Grand Master, on receiving the intelligence, proceeded to arrest the accused, and to bring them to trial. The prosecution was conducted by a Dr. Frances-

chetti, a native of Savoy, who had been charged some time before by the Inquisitor-General with holding heretical opinions, and who had been incarcerated in the dungeons attached to the Holy Office. Franceschetti was not likely to be lukewarm in the discharge of his duty as counsel for the Order on this occasion; but notwithstanding all his efforts the evidence broke down, and recourse was had to the Inquisition's own remedy in similar cases—the torture. The knights, though cordially hating the Inquisitor and all his crew, were of opinion that Impellizeri, for purposes of his own, had made a charge which was utterly false. A Council was summoned, and, on a review of all the proceedings, the Grand Master and his party were severely blamed for suffering respectable men, against whom no crime had been proved, to be tortured for the purpose of extorting a confession; and the feeling against De la Cassière ran so high that he only saved himself from deposition by suggesting an appeal to Rome. The matter came before the Pope, who contrived to hush up the whole affair, being unwilling probably, by pronouncing a decision, to incur, as he must have done, the hatred of the Order on the one hand, or of the Inquisition on the other.

The following year fresh rumours of invasion were heard, and new fortifications were erected in Gozo. The rumours, however, proved false, and public confidence was restored for a moment. Only for a moment, however, for it was discovered that so small was the supply of corn and other provisions in the island that a famine was imminent. Matters now came to a crisis. The Order resolved to declare De la Cassière incompetent to govern, to depose him, and to nominate a Deputy Grand Master. A Council was held on the 6th of July, and the deputy selected was a knight named Romegasso. Two days after De la Cassière was privately conveyed to the Castle of St. Angelo, and there he remained a prisoner in the hands of his own companions in arms. As soon as his imprisonment

became known, friends started up unexpectedly on all sides to procure his liberation. The knight Chambrillan visited him at St. Angelo, and offered his services, in case the Grand Master should wish to employ force against his enemies. The Viceroy of Sicily sent over three armed galleys; and two thousand of the Maltese, sympathising with the Grand Master in his misfortunes, expressed their willingness to assist in setting him free. Never did De la Cassière exhibit so much prudence and judgment as in this emergency. He would listen to no proposal for the employment of force in his behalf, but referred the decision of the dispute between him and the Council to the Pope, who, on hearing what had occurred, at once despatched to Malta his Legate, Monsignor Visconti, with full power to act on his behalf. The Legate heard both sides with calmness, but refused to pronounce judgment; and ordered both De la Cassière and Romegasso to proceed to Rome, where the Pope in person would hear and decide the case. On the 20th September, De la Cassière, who, on the arrival of the Legate, had been set at liberty, left Malta for Rome, accompanied by two hundred knights; but contrary winds drove the galleys into St. Paul's Bay, where they were detained for five days; and during those five days such heavy and continuous rain fell that for many years after the year 1581 was known in Malta as the year of the deluge. Romegasso left Malta a week later than the Grand Master, but arrived in Rome before him. De la Cassière, on his arrival, was most graciously received by the Pope; and the Deputy, perceiving that public opinion was setting in strongly against him, and that the authority of the Grand Master would be upheld by the whole power of the Court and people of Rome, began to tremble for the consequences of his own conduct. Before the trial came on he took to his bed, and died after a few days' illness. "O just judgment of God!" exclaimed the supporters of De la Cassière's authority. But alas for the fallibility of human opinions! De la Cassière followed his

enemy to the grave within a few days. He was permitted to have an opportunity of justifying his conduct in the presence of the Pontiff and the Court; and then, seized with sudden illness, he expired on the 23rd December, at the age of seventy-eight. His funeral obsequies were performed with great pomp, and an oration was pronounced in his honour by the preacher Mureto; after which his body was conveyed to Malta, and buried in the Cathedral of St. John. He had during his administration erected very handsome monuments in the cathedral to the memory of L'Isle Adam, Du Pont, D'Omedes, De la Sengle, La Vallette, and De Monte, and his own remains now rest by the side of those of his illustrious predecessors. His career was one of the least distinguished in the history of the Order. Flattered and courted by the Pope, he was hated by his own brethren. In Rome it was easy to find a preacher to pronounce an elaborate panegyric over his remains; but in Malta few could be found to utter a word in his praise, or in his defence, until the moment of his imprisonment in St. Angelo; and the few who then defended him did so, not because of his personal merit, but because, whatever may have been his conduct, his deposition and imprisonment without a trial were manifestly acts of injustice. He lived in the midst of turmoil and litigation; he died "unwept, unhonoured, and unsung."

CHAPTER VIII.

MALTA UNDER THE KNIGHTS OF ST. JOHN.—HUGO DE VERDALLE TO ALOPHIUS VIGNACOURT. 1582 TO 1622.

HUGO DE VERDALLE, 1582.—The year 1581 came to a close with the death of De la Cassière. Everything in Malta was in a state of utter confusion, and party feeling ran very high. The more prudent members of the Order, fearing that the election of a new Grand Master would, under the circumstances, be attended with great difficulty, resolved to request the Pope to exercise his authority, as supreme head of the Order, and to nominate a successor to De la Cassière. The Pope, however, refused to do more than recommend to the notice of the Council three knights, named Penisses, Moreton, and Hugo de Verdalle. The last of these, a Frenchman by birth, was elected, not without some opposition on the part of the Spanish knights, but with a very considerable majority of the Council in his favour.

Verdalle first turned his attention to the completion of the fortifications. A letter addressed by the Legate, Monsignor Visconti, to the Pope is extant, from which it appears that, at the time of Verdalle's accession, the city of Valletta contained two thousand houses; that the palace, the public hospital, some of the auberges, the courts of justice, the public ovens, and a few other buildings were completed; that there were on the ramparts one hundred and fifty brass cannons, besides twelve in St. Angelo; that the inhabitants of Notabile had begun to move into the new city; that twenty thousand quarters of grain were annually imported from Sicily; and that Malta

produced about one hundred casks of wine every year. The Legate speaks in this letter in the highest terms of the people of Malta, particularly of their attention to religious observances; and he adds sarcastically, "Would to God that the same could be said of the knights!"

During this year (1582) a most extraordinary scene occurred. I relate it on the authority of Dr. Vassallo, who quotes the account from the works of the Cavaliere del Pozzo, and who informs his readers that the statements of Del Pozzo are corroborated by several manuscripts to be found in the Public Library at Malta. Pope Gregory XIII. had, by a bull issued in 1578, imposed a tax of four hundred ducats on the revenues of the Bishop of Malta, and made it payable to the Inquisition. The Bishop naturally resisted the payment of this tax; upon which the Inquisitor-General proceeded to pass sentence upon him of deposition from the episcopal office, and appointed the Dean of the cathedral at Notabile to put the sentence into execution. Bishop Gargallo was not a man to be thus trifled with. Issuing forth into the streets of Notabile with an armed body of men, he burst open the doors of several houses in search of the Dean; but not finding him, he proceeded to the cathedral, where he made a furious attack on the captain of the Holy Office, whom he caught in the very act of publishing the sentence of deposition from the altar. Then, going to the door of the cathedral, he tore down with his own hands the official copy of the sentence, and announced to the congregation his determination to set at defiance the authority of the Inquisition. The Bishop, however, found that the terrors of the Holy Office were more feared than his own verbal threats. The Chapter refused to acknowledge him or to submit to his jurisdiction; and the canon, Bernardino Lauda, a native of Rhodes, and the Assessor of the Holy Office, was elected Capitular Vicar in the place of Bishop Gargallo. Upon this the Bishop became, of course, more furious than ever. On the following Sunday he sent his

chaplain to the cathedral, with a body of men fully armed. The service of high mass was going on. Having secured the doors, the chaplain proceeded to make prisoners of the canons. In the gorgeous robes in which they had been officiating they were led out of the cathedral, tied to the tails of the Bishop's horses, and dragged to the prisons of the Borgo. There they were consigned to a low, damp, subterranean dungeon, where they remained twelve days; at the end of which time two of them, one of whom was the Capitular Vicar, died; and the others were found to be so seriously ill that they died afterwards in consequence of the hardships endured during those twelve days. The Bishop, moreover, proceeded to confiscate their goods, and to deprive them of their canonries, which he conferred on friends of his own; and, having done this, he quitted Malta with his chaplains, leaving the deprived canons in strict custody.

The precentor of the cathedral, Luca Bonnici, contrived, however, to escape from confinement, and at once set sail for Rome, where he presented to the Pope a memorial,* setting forth the violence, the cruelty, and the gross conduct of Bishop Gargallo. The memorial was laid before the Congregation of the Holy Office, and the Bishop was summoned to appear in person at Rome to answer for his acts. A summons from the Inquisition could not in those days be treated with contempt even by a bishop. The guilty prelate was compelled to obey the summons, and, by a decree of the Pope, issued on the 11th October, 1584, he was condemned to be six months suspended from his episcopal functions, and two years deprived of all jurisdiction in his diocese. He was, moreover, condemned to banishment from Malta during those two years, and he was ordered to pay the heirs-at-law of the two deceased canons the sum of six hundred crowns; a very lenient sentence when the gross nature of his offence is considered, and when it is

* This memorial is to be found amongst the MSS. preserved in the Public Library at Malta.

remembered that by his violence two priests under his own episcopal jurisdiction were deprived of life. This incident, occurring as it did not very many years after the commencement of the Reformation, gives us a glimpse into the internal condition of the Church of Rome which those who are outside of her communion are seldom permitted to get.

Disputes now arose between the Order and the Government of Venice. The Venetians had tried to prevent the galleys of the Order from sailing in the waters of their possessions in the Levant, lest umbrage should by their presence be given to the Turks, whom the Venetians had reason to dread. Two galleys, sailing off Candia, were seized by the Venetians and detained in the harbour of that island. Tidings of this event had scarcely reached the Grand Master when a calamity occurred nearer home. A band of pirates from the coast of Barbary made a descent on Gozo, and carried away about sixty of the inhabitants under cover of the night. The soldiers stationed at various parts of the island gave the alarm by firing their muskets; but before assistance could be procured the pirates had decamped and had sailed away out of sight, taking with them their prisoners and a considerable amount of plunder.

In consequence of this untoward and unforeseen accident, Verdalle, like a prudent man, determined to build, on a commanding position of the island of Malta, a well-constructed fort, which should always contain a garrison prepared to resist the invasions of the Barbary pirates. The fortress round Valletta and the Borgo could afford, on account of its distance, little or no protection to the inhabitants of Gozo, and of those parts of Malta which lay nearest to the shores of Africa. Money was all that was required to carry on the undertaking, and a sufficient sum having been obtained by means of a tax placed on some of the necessaries of life, and by means of voluntary contributions, the powerful fort was erected which is still to be seen on the eminence overhanging St. Paul's Bay.

Verdalle was, as I have said, a Frenchman; and amongst his most active enemies were the knights of the language of Spain. These knights, for their own party purposes, contrived to spread abroad a rumour that Verdalle was contemplating the cession of Malta and its dependencies to France, and the rumour was pretty generally believed. Ten Sicilian galleys, under the command of Admiral Doria, were accordingly sent over to Malta by the Spanish Viceroy, in 1584, ostensibly to pay a visit of ceremony to the Grand Master, but in reality to counteract his supposed designs in favour of France. The Grand Master received the Admiral with great respect, and entertained him most hospitably; and certainly nothing occurred during his visit which could induce him to credit the report of Verdalle's disloyalty.

Gregory XIII. died during the month of April, 1584, and was succeeded by Sixtus V., the intimate friend of Verdalle, who, soon after the accession of his friend to the Papal throne, was summoned to Rome and created a cardinal. Dr. Vassallo gives Verdalle credit for his piety, which he tells us was evinced by his building the Ursuline and the Capuchin convents in Malta. He informs us also that Verdalle had distinguished himself in Africa under D'Omedes, but that he had not been present at the defence of Malta against the Turks. There did not seem, therefore, any sufficient reason why he should be singled out for the honour of receiving a cardinal's hat. The Pope, however, according to Dr. Vassallo, seems in promoting him to have been influenced partly by motives of personal friendship, and partly by a desire to give *éclat* to the office of Grand Master, which, during the reign of De la Cassière, had suffered great degradation. The only other Grand Masters of the Order who were raised to the dignity of cardinal were Peter d'Aubusson, who at Rhodes had signally defeated the Sultan Mohammed II., the destroyer of the Byzantine empire, and L'Isle Adam.

Verdalle, on his return to Malta, after having been raised to the dignity of a prince of the Holy Roman Church, assembled a General Chapter in 1588, at which he received the congratulations of his *confrères* on his promotion. His next step was to select a site for a country palace. In the neighbourhood of Notabile is a pretty valley, called the Boschetto, or little forest, —a favourite place with modern English residents in Malta for picnic parties. On a rocky eminence, immediately above the Boschetto, Verdalle built his palace; and, employing Francesco Paladini, a painter of some renown, he caused the walls of the palace to be covered with fresco paintings, illustrating the chief incidents of his own career. These pictures are still in tolerably good preservation, and may be seen by the traveller who visits the Palace of Verdalle, or Verdala, as it is generally called in the present day.

Sixtus V. died in August, 1590, and was succeeded by Urban XII. Urban had a nephew in the Order of St. John, named Mellini, who at this time was resident in Malta. No sooner had the news of Urban's accession arrived in Malta than Mellini received the greatest marks of respect from the Grand Master. He was invited to leave the auberge in which he lived with his brother knights, and to take up his abode in the Palace of the Grand Master. Every one courted the society of Mellini, and strove to do him honour. But alas for the hollowness of the world and the hypocrisy of human nature! Urban died just one fortnight after his election to the Papal throne, and Mellini was thereupon removed from the palace to his auberge, and sank back again into his original insignificance.

The Pontifical throne was now occupied by Gregory XIV., who reigned about a year, and then by Innocent IX., who reigned only two months. The next Pope was Clement VIII., in whom Verdalle found a determined and insatiable foe. The reader must not be surprised if I make frequent reference

in this narrative to the succession of the Roman Pontiffs. The Popes were the supreme heads of the Order of St. John, and they exercised an overwhelming influence over the destinies of the people of Malta. The Bishops of Malta, who were appointed by the Popes, possessed almost unlimited authority over the laity as well as over the clergy; and the Inquisitors-General were the agents of the Popes, specially appointed to punish with unrelenting rigour every one, whether he were a layman or a priest, who was convicted of any offence which could by any possibility be construed into an act of resistance to Papal authority. The political history of Malta, during the period which I am now describing, is therefore so completely mixed up with its ecclesiastical history that the former cannot possibly be understood without a thorough knowledge of the latter.

It may be well to mention in this place that, according to the census taken in 1590, the population of Malta and Gozo was 30,500. We shall see, as we proceed with our story, how great a change has taken place in this respect, and how Malta is now one of the most densely-peopled spots in the whole world.

I have said that during the government of De la Cassière famine was regarded as imminent. Verdalle had not turned his attention to his duties as chief governor of the island. Instead of taking steps to secure a supply of corn from Sicily, he was intent on schemes to promote his own personal influence, and thought of little besides his palace, in which he hoped to live for the rest of his days in inglorious ease. The consequence of his neglect was that, in 1591, no fewer than three thousand persons died of starvation; and famine, as is generally the case, was succeeded by pestilence. Of the plague which raged at this time in Malta an account has been written by a Sicilian physician, Dr. Pietro Parisi, who was sent over to Malta by the Viceroy of Sicily to give the sufferers the benefit of his advice. He tells us that the plague commenced in June,

1592, and lasted till the September of the following year, during which time about three thousand fell victims to it. On the cessation of the plague a public thanksgiving was offered in the churches throughout the island, a new confraternity was formed and attached to the Church of St. Roque, and, with an incongruity which makes every sober-minded man stare with astonishment, annual *horse races* were instituted in commemoration of the event. Every year, on the 16th August, the resident in Malta may see the horse races at the Pietà, in the neighbourhood of Valletta; but few amongst the thousands who annually witness the sport are aware of the singular circumstance that they were intended to commemorate the deliverance of the island from pestilence upwards of two hundred and fifty years ago.

An important event now took place. Bishop Gargallo had found himself worsted in his contest with the Holy Office of Inquisition, and in his distress he turned to those ever-ready and ever-vigilant emissaries of Rome, the Jesuits, hoping by their means to check the growing power of the Inquisitor-General, and to regain some of the authority which he himself had lost. For years he had been using all his influence in Rome to accomplish his wish, but it was not till the autumn of 1592 that the final arrangements were made. By the terms of the contract entered into between the Pope and the Bishop, the Grand Master being a consenting party, the church and the convent, still called *Dei Gesuiti*, in Strada San Paolo, were made over to the disciples of Loyola, and a sum of money was granted for the maintenance of twelve priests. The Jesuits, on their part, bound themselves to open two schools for the instruction of the youth of Malta, and to take the general superintendence of education in the island. It will be seen in the course of this narrative how the Jesuits in Malta, as in every other part of the world, soon rendered themselves, by their intrigues, obnoxious to the people; how they were

forcibly expelled from their convent and from the island; and how, notwithstanding their strenuous efforts, the Maltese have, up to the present time, prevented them from regaining their lost authority.

The church of the Jesuits is at present used as a place of worship for the Roman Catholic troops belonging to the garrison of Malta. The convent has been, ever since the British occupation, under the control of the local government, and has been used as a school for the education of the professional men of Malta, under the title of the Malta Government University.

No sooner had the Jesuits settled in Malta than the whole surface of society was agitated by violent contentions. The younger knights disliked the strictness of their discipline; the people dreaded their interference in the social circle, where they always contrived to disturb the harmony that had previously existed, and to foment discord and hatred. Both the knights and the people openly expressed their displeasure at their arrival and settlement in the island. It was said that God had lately delivered the island from one plague, but only to inflict upon it another and a more terrible one; and one of the priors of the Order of St. John went so far as to address a letter to the Grand Master, in which he declared the admission of the Jesuits into Malta as the gravest error into which Verdalle had fallen during his administration.

In the midst of these social contests, which became every year more and more serious, Verdalle was seized with illness. During the year 1595 he had been accused of injustice in his dealings with the Council, of unfairness in the appointments which he made to the different offices in the Order, and of gross immorality. Both his public character and his conduct in private life were assailed; and he was summoned to defend himself against the charges made by his enemies in the presence of the Pope. As if this were not sufficient to agitate his mind, rumours of another intended attack upon the island were

spread far and wide; and the people of Malta, starving for want of the bare necessaries of life, were on the very point of breaking out into open rebellion against the Order. Oppressed by the cares of office, worn out with anxiety, and tormented with gout, Verdalle died on the 4th May, 1595, at the age of sixty-four, having governed the Order of St. John for more than thirteen years. He had accumulated a large fortune, and had squandered much of it in self-indulgence; and, probably to atone for his extravagance, he left what remained at his death to the Order over which he had presided. The Treasury of the Order was nearly empty at Verdalle's death, and therefore it was with no small feeling of delight the announcement was received, both by the knights and by the people, that the Grand Master had bequeathed in his dying moments the magnificent sum of half a million of crowns, equal in value to £125,000 sterling.

The Council having assembled on the 7th May, three days after Verdalle's death, elected as his successor Martin Garzes, a knight of the language of Arragon.

Martin Garzes, 1595.—Of all the languages composing the Order of St. John, the most powerful at the period of which I am writing was that of Spain. Sicily at that time formed part of the Spanish dominions, and as nearly all the provisions used in Malta were obtained from Sicily, it was found that Malta was always better governed when a Spanish knight was at the head of affairs. The administration of Garzes was no exception to this rule. Although a good deal of discontent prevailed amongst all classes in consequence of past acts of injustice, the people were better fed and better clothed during his magistracy than they had been for many years before. It is recorded that at this time it was possible to obtain "bread of good quality and of proper weight."

One of the acts of Martin Garzes, which tended in some measure to the relief of the people, was the establishment of a

Public Pawnbrokery, or *Mont de Piété*—an institution still in existence, and admirably managed by the local government of Malta.

Another of his acts was very peculiar in its character, and not without its use. Ever since Valletta had been completed and had become the seat of government, a migration had been steadily going on from Notabile, the old capital, and property had in consequence become very much depreciated there, whilst in Valletta it was rising in value every day. The Grand Master, unwilling that Notabile, around which so many interesting historical associations were clustered, should be completely abandoned, issued a proclamation which converted it into a kind of sanctuary. It was enacted that all who went to reside within its walls should be free from arrest for debt for the space of six years; and further, that in any cause, whether of a civil or criminal nature, no tribunal outside its walls should have any jurisdiction over its inhabitants.

As might have been expected from the presence of the Jesuits, disputes arose on points of jurisdiction between the Grand Master and the Inquisitor-General. The Grand Master was inclined to retain all authority in his own hands. The Inquisitor-General insisted on his right to put the law in force against heretics. A case arose which brought the matter to an issue. The captain of a French ship, being accused of heresy, was arrested by order of the Inquisitor. The Grand Master questioned the authority of the Court of Inquisition; but on an appeal to Rome, the Pope upheld it. A similar case arose on the arrest of a knight, named Pontois, who, in a scuffle, had wounded a familiar of the Holy Office. The decisions of the Popes in all cases of this kind were invariably in favour of the ecclesiastical and against the lay tribunal.

Garzes ruled the Order for six years, which were not marked by any event of importance. Towards the close of his career Garzes ordered a tower to be built on the eminence which

commands the harbour of Miggiarro, in Gozo. The remains of it may still be seen. He died on the 7th February, 1601, having, during the short period of his administration, earned a character for prudence, wisdom, and discretion. The very day after his death, the Council elected as his successor the Grand Hospitaller of the Order, the knight Alophius Vignacourt, a Frenchman, whose name has been preserved in Malta in connection with the aqueduct which is still called after him, and which arrests the traveller's attention on the high road leading from Valletta to Notabile.

ALOPHIUS VIGNACOURT, 1601.—Notwithstanding the public calamities of the past ten years, and the removal of many families of distinction to Sicily, Malta contained on the accession of Vignacourt, 33,000 inhabitants, of whom about one-sixth lived within the walls of Valletta. Provisions, however, were still scarce, and the difficulty of governing the island still very great. In order to obtain a supply of provisions, and to draw off attention from internal mismanagement by the *éclat* of foreign war, the Grand Master planned an attack on the Castles of Lepanto and Patras, on the coast of the Morea, in the year 1603. He had been informed by a Greek adventurer that the castles were full of corn, and he had no scruples of conscience about plundering the Turks, the implacable foes of the Order. Ten galleys were accordingly fitted out, and placed under the command of the knight Cambiano. On board of them were two hundred knights, and eight hundred soldiers, commanded by an officer named Viviers. The galleys arrived safely at their destination, and the troops were successfully landed by night. Early the next morning the attack on the castles was made; and, as it was quite unexpected, there was very little resistance, and the victory of the knights was complete; but the corn, the prize that had tempted Vignacourt to hazard this attack, existed only in the imagination of the Greek adventurer who had suggested the expedition.

Disappointed in their expectations, the soldiers of the Order burned and destroyed all before them; and, having vented their wrath on the garrison of the castle, they retired with three hundred and ninety-two slaves and seventy-six pieces of ordnance, and set sail for Malta. On their voyage home they fell in with two Turkish vessels, which were found to be laden with grain. These they attacked, and took without much difficulty. The grain was placed in the granaries of the Order at Malta, and afforded some little compensation to the Grand Master for the expense attending the expedition. The people, proud of the ancient glories of the Order, sounded on all sides the praises of the Grand Master, and admired his courageous effort to relieve their wants. For a time all went well; and it seemed as if days of happiness were about to dawn on an island that had been so long in depths of misery. Ten years passed away without any event of sufficient consequence to be related in this narrative. Numerous encounters took place with Turkish and Algerine corsairs, in most of which the knights were victorious.

The attack on Lepanto and Patras suggested the possibility of similar attacks on other places. One in particular occupied the attention of Vignacourt in the spring of 1614. It was planned by an English merchant-captain, named Robert Elliott, who is described as "an experienced man, and a good Catholic." Elliott proposed to set fire to the Turkish fleet in the harbour of Algiers, and offered to take the command of the expedition which was to be fitted out for this purpose. Vignacourt approved of the plan, and gave orders to the knight Mendes to prepare and equip as many galleys as were considered sufficient for the purpose. Mendes, having obeyed his orders, set sail for Algiers, to join Elliott, who had preceded him. What the result of this expedition was has never been ascertained. The knight Del Pozzo, from whose account the particulars just mentioned are gleaned, declares himself unable

to say whether any attack was ever made on Algiers at all. Elliott seems to have disappeared mysteriously. At any rate, he is not mentioned again; and the next thing we hear is that Mendes, with the fleet of the Order, spent several months in cruising round the coast of Sicily. When at Messina, rumours reached Mendes of an intended attack on Malta by the Turks, and, without a moment's delay, he sailed with his fleet across the channel, and arrived just in time to meet the Ottoman fleet off the bay called Marsascirocco. The Turks had landed. The alarm had spread through the island. The Grand Master had made preparations for resistance. A battle, long, obstinate, and bloody, was expected, when the Turkish general received intelligence that the galleys of Mendes were in sight, and were bearing down upon him. Afraid that by the destruction of the fleet his retreat would be cut off, he gave orders to get on board as quickly as possible, before Mendes should arrive in the Bay; and, scudding before a favourable wind, the Turkish fleet was soon out of sight. Mendes pursued for a short distance; but night coming on, he shortened sail, and on the next morning not one of the sixty Ottoman ships which had sailed into Marsascirocco Bay was to be seen even on the distant horizon.

Shortly after this surprise the Grand Master thought it prudent to erect two forts, that of St. Thomas, at Marsascala, and that of Santa Maria, near Burmola. When these forts were completed, he erected the tower still to be seen on the island of Comino, and added a bastion to Fort St. Elmo, which received the name of the Bastion Vendôme, in honour of the prince of that name, brother of Louis XIII. of France, and a distinguished member of the Order.

The great work, however, of Vignacourt's life is the aqueduct which bears his name. This useful addition to the resources of the island was suggested by his predecessor, Martin Garzes, who, however, was afraid to undertake it, on

account of the great expense, which he feared he would be unable to meet. The coffers of the Order had been replenished during the administration of Vignacourt; and when the plans and estimates for the work were laid before the Council, they met with general approval. A Jesuit, named Tomasucci, was appointed to superintend the work. This aqueduct was constructed on the old Roman plan. Arches were built across every valley that lay between the springs in the neighbourhood of Notabile and the city of Valletta. The aqueduct still supplies Valletta with most delicious and refreshing water; but as the channel was not sufficiently capacious to bring into the city a supply large enough to meet the wants of the inhabitants, a second aqueduct was constructed a few years ago, consisting of metal pipes laid down underground, Valletta being on a much lower level than the springs from which the water flows. The inhabitants of Malta are, however, chiefly dependent for their supply of water on the clouds. On this subject I shall have something to say when I come to consider the present condition of the island.

No accident occurred to prevent the completion of the aqueduct, and on the 21st April, 1614, the Grand Master, surrounded by the knights and the whole body of the clergy, turned the water into the principal fountain, which still stands in St. George's Square. The Prior of the Convent pronounced his benediction, salutes were fired from the batteries, shouts arose from the assembled multitude, and blessings were invoked by all classes on the enterprising and persevering Grand Master, who had brought so important a work to a successful issue.* The value of property in Valletta was now, of course, greatly increased; and the constant supply of pure water in a town where the intense heat which prevails for several months in the year renders water the greatest of all

* The cost of Vignacourt's aqueduct was nearly £13,000 sterling.

luxuries, added very much to the comfort and to the health of the inhabitants.

The year in which the aqueduct was completed was marked by the death of that restless and imperious prelate, Bishop Gargallo, at the age of seventy-eight. He had presided over his diocese for thirty-six years. His successor was a native of Malta, named Cagliares, who, having been nominated by the Grand Master, was consecrated by Pope Paul V.

The last years of Vignacourt's life were passed in tranquillity. The island had, under his government, greatly recovered from its former depression; and Valletta, from the day that he began to rule over it, rose in importance. He had the honour, during his administration, of entertaining several of the princes of Europe, and many distinguished visitors. Ferdinand I., Emperor of Germany, conferred on Vignacourt, on account of his hospitality and his other virtues, the title of Most Serene Highness. Laden with honours, and greatly beloved by the Order of St. John, Vignacourt died at the age of seventy-five, on the 14th September, 1622. Dr. Vassallo, in concluding his account of this eminent man, says that "not one of the twenty-eight Grand Masters who ruled over Malta deserved so well of the Maltese people as Alophius Vignacourt."

CHAPTER IX.

MALTA UNDER THE KNIGHTS OF ST. JOHN.—LOUIS MENDES VASCONCELLOS TO NICHOLAS COTONER. 1622 TO 1680.

Louis Mendes Vasconcellos, 1622.—Two candidates for the office of Grand Master came forward on the death of Vignacourt—the Bailiff of Acre, Louis Mendes Vasconcellos, and the Prior of St. Giles, Anthony de Paule. The former was elected. He is known in the history of Malta as the Grand Master Mendes. He had been a successful warrior, an able politician, had distinguished himself in the literary world, and was well fitted to preside over the illustrious Order of St. John; but at the time of his election he was eighty years of age. The days of his youth and of his vigour had passed away. He might perhaps have governed for a few years if his health had been good; and he certainly would have greatly benefited the Order by his judicious counsels. But at the time of his election his powers had begun to fail; and in less than six months after he was invested with the magisterial dignity, he was laid in the grave, by the side of so many of his distinguished predecessors.

The only circumstance of note that occurred during his short reign was a quarrel with the new Bishop. I have already said that a native of Malta had been appointed to succeed Bishop Gargallo. This seems to have given umbrage to some of the knights, who appeared to think that the episcopal office in Malta should be reserved as a matter of right for an ecclesiastic belonging to the Order. Cagliares, the new Bishop, was

resolute in maintaining his authority, but took care to give no cause of offence. For want of some better pretext to pick a quarrel with him, it appears that the Grand Master objected to his building a residence within the walls of Valletta, and issued an inhibition against the erection of the Bishop's palace, which had been commenced. The Bishops of Malta had for centuries past resided at Notabile. The Grand Masters had, since the cession of the island by Charles V., resided first at the Borgo, then in Valletta. Mendes seems to have feared, or rather, seems to have pretended that he feared, an *imperium in imperio*, and therefore one of his first acts was to forbid the Bishop to complete the building of his palace, and to order him peremptorily to go and reside, as his predecessors had done, at Notabile. The Bishop, on whom the mantle of Gargallo seems to have descended, replied that the jurisdiction of the Bishop extended over the whole island, and, consequently, over Valletta; that a general migration had taken place from Notabile to Valletta, and that wherever the flock is, there the shepherd is bound to be; that all classes of persons had not only been permitted, but invited, to come and build in Valletta, and surely the Bishop ought not to be the only person excluded from the new city. Even the enemies of the Bishop could not resist the force of these arguments. The inhibition was removed; the Bishop finished his palace, and went to reside in it. His successors have resided in it ever since; and the street in which it is situated was afterwards known as the Bishop's Street, *Strada Vescovo.* Alongside of the palace of the Bishop of Malta has stood, from the year 1842, that of the Bishop of Gibraltar; so that the street may now well be called the Bishops' Street, *la Strada dei Vescovi.*

In the month of December, 1622—the very year of his election—Mendes was taken ill; and after lingering for two months, he died on the 7th March, 1623. Three days after, his fellow-candidate, Anthony de Paule, was appointed to succeed him.

ANTHONY DE PAULE, 1623. — For the first time in the history of the Order, the people of Malta had a voice in the election of a Grand Master. Many of the priests of Malta had been admitted into the Order under certain restrictions as chaplains; and these chaplains gradually obtained a voice in the Council. The priests were in the confidence, and to a certain extent under the influence, of the people; and the will of the people was manifested in the votes of the chaplains at the Council Board. On the present occasion a certain chaplain, named Imbroll, exerted himself to obtain the election of Anthony de Paule, and being successful, was appointed shortly after to an office of some importance at Madrid, through the influence of the Grand Master. The Maltese formed great expectations from the accession of De Paule. One month after his election, the Grand Master visited Notabile in state, accompanied by the mounted militia of the island, and after receiving the silver keys of the city from the principal citizen, swore to maintain "all the rights and privileges granted to the islands of Malta and Gozo by the august sovereigns of Sicily and Arragon." For more than a hundred years this custom had been omitted, and the Maltese had been compelled to submit to a Government always absolute, and sometimes tyrannical. Now, however, better days seemed to be approaching; and those who had sighed to see the individuality of the Maltese people lost in the general assumption of authority by a powerful Order, began to recall to mind the days of Count Roger, and to dream of municipal assemblies revived, and of Government no longer arbitrary, but constitutional.

But clouds soon began to gather. Pope Urban VIII. had succeeded to the Papal throne; and to him it was intimated, by the enemies of De Paule, that his election had been obtained by bribery and other unfair means; that De Paule himself was not remarkable for honesty; and that he had habitually broken his vows of chastity. There can be little doubt that these

accusations were brought against him by those who dreaded the spirit of independence which from the beginning he had fostered amongst the people of Malta. Bribery was so common, that had it not been for De Paule's liberal tendencies no notice would have been taken of any act of his tending to obtain his election by the aid of money, and unchastity could not be imputed to him alone. There were very few of De Paule's brethren against whom the same charge could not be brought. Indeed, if public opinion could be believed, a chaste knight was more rarely to be met with than a black swan.

The Pope sent a commission to Malta to investigate the charges against the Grand Master; but it was a long time before any satisfactory conclusion could be arrived at. So far as can be ascertained, De Paule appears, in regard to the first charge, to have received secret orders from Rome to be less liberal in his politics; and the second charge was condoned in these words, contained in a letter written to him by the Pope:—"Your eminent services in regard to religion may serve as your defence against the accusations of the malevolent."

In 1632 a census was taken, from which it appeared that the islands contained a population of 54,463; so that in thirty years there had been an increase of upwards of 11,000—the best proof that could be given of the efforts made by Vignacourt and De Paule to promote wealth and prosperity. Good government and just laws impartially administered would soon have raised Malta to a position of considerable importance; but disputes continued to agitate the minds of the civil and ecclesiastical rulers, and in the midst of these disputes the interests of the people were neglected.

The reign of De Paule was longer than those of some of his predecessors, but was singularly barren of events. He lived to be eighty-five years of age, of which thirteen were passed in the office of Grand Master. His death took place on the 9th June, 1635.

LASCARIS CASTELLAR, 1635.—The new Grand Master claimed to be descended from the Byzantine emperors. He was a native of Nice. He entered upon his duties at a time of peculiar difficulty. There was a great scarcity of provisions in the island. Spain and France were at war, and supplies could with difficulty be obtained from Sicily. Rumours of a Turkish invasion again prevailed, and Lascaris was compelled, notwithstanding the depressed condition of his finances, to undertake the great line of fortifications around the land side of the city of Valletta which had been planned by Colonel Floriani, an Italian engineer, and the space within which and Valletta is to this day called *Floriana.* In order to meet the expenses of this new undertaking, the Grand Master resorted to the expedient of brass coinage, redeemable in three years. He thus procured fifty thousand crowns to supply his pressing wants. His next step was to remodel the island militia, which had, through the carelessness of his predecessors, become quite inefficient. In the course of a few months he had six thousand able-bodied men, tolerably well disciplined, on whom he had reason to believe he could rely in the event of an attack on the island. In his zeal for the Church, however, he issued an order, the consequences of which were soon found to be very inconvenient. Whilst he required the inhabitants to assist in carrying on the building of the new fortifications, he exempted as a special favour "all ecclesiastics;" and not content with relieving them from the necessity for manual labour, he exempted them further from the payment of taxes levied on articles of consumption. The result was very remarkable. Immense numbers of persons requested that they might be admitted to holy orders; and the Bishop, probably from a wish to embarrass the Grand Master, actually granted the request, so much so that a very considerable number even of the lower classes were admitted to the inferior ecclesiastical offices which are so numerous in the Church of Rome. Lascaris complained to the

King of Spain, who, however, wisely refused to interfere with the Bishop. An appeal was therefore made to the Pope, who, whilst unable to undo what had been done, commanded the Bishop to abstain from conferring ordination thus lightly in future. The Bishop appears to have obeyed the injunction of the Pontiff, and to have ceased from degrading the offices of the Church by conferring them on menials; by laying careless hands on skulls that could not teach, and would not learn.*

The construction of the fortifications planned by Colonel Floriani had been vigorously prosecuted for upwards of two years, when the Grand Master thought proper to change his design. I give the account of this change in the words of Lieutenant-Colonel Porter:†—"In 1638 an ecclesiastic named Father Fiorenzola (or Firenzuola), a monk of the Order of St. Augustine, visited Malta. Strange as it may seem for so holy a man to have excelled in the art of fortification, it is nevertheless the fact that the reverend father's talent in that line had gained him a very high reputation, and that his engineering labours materially aided him in obtaining the dignity of a cardinal, to which he was raised some years subsequently. The report of Father Fiorenzola upon the fortifications, compiled at the urgent request of the Grand Master, was presented on the 28th September, 1638. He highly commended the original trace of Valletta, which he considered well adapted to the site, and most judiciously arranged, the only suggestion which he made to increase the strength of this portion of the works being the addition of three demilunes or ravelins to its curtains, after which he declared that the place might be considered impregnable. On the other hand, he objected entirely to the new work then progressing in the suburb, and already known as the Floriana, in honour of its designer. He

* "From such Apostles, O ye mitred heads, preserve the Church,
And lay not careless hands on skulls that cannot teach and will not learn."
Cowper.

† History of the Fortress of Malta.

considered that this enclosure occupied a soil so rocky that it could never have been made use of by an enemy to construct approaches to the place; whereas the new work would, if captured, be in itself a material assistance to the besiegers in providing them with cover. He also made the same objection that others had previously put forward, viz., that the centre of the line was encumbered with a vast quantity of useless works, whilst the flanks were too weak and their bastions too acute. He wound up his remarks on this head by stating that although a sum of eighty thousand scudi (upwards of £6,500) had been already expended, it would be far better at once to destroy the work than to spend double that amount to complete it.

"The locality which Fiorenzola considered the most dangerous, and consequently the most vital to secure, was the hill of Santa Margarita, which dominated over the Bourg, and rendered its defence a matter of great difficulty. The harbour itself lay completely open to fire from this point, which, when occupied by an enemy, would prevent the retention of the smallest craft by the garrison, and thus Valletta, finding itself cut off from all assistance, would not hold out long, but would yield without difficulty from the simple effects of a blockade. A project was submitted by him for the occupation of these heights by an enceinte which should bring them within the limits of the works of the Bourg.

"This new design met with very general approval on all sides; the Floriana was at once discontinued, and the works on Margarita Hill were commenced. Three bastions, with their connecting curtains, were traced and completed; after which, from want of funds, no further progress was made till the year 1716."

Early in 1639 an effort was made to re-establish the language of England in the Order. An English gentleman, named Nicholas Fortescue, went to Malta for the purpose, with letters

of recommendation from Henrietta Maria, the consort of Charles I. of England. Mr. Fortescue's project promised to be successful; his negotiations were being conducted to the satisfaction of all the parties concerned, when the contest between Charles and his Parliament commenced, and the Order of St. John was completely forgotten in the midst of the din of civil war in England.

The very same year the Jesuits were expelled from Malta, as they had been expelled from nearly every civilised country in the world. The restless ambition of these intriguing churchmen rendered them in Malta, as elsewhere, objects of the most intense hatred to nearly all classes. The Grand Master, acting under their influence, had prohibited women from wearing masks during the carnival. The penalty for disobedience of this regulation was declared to be *flogging*. He had also prohibited all dramatic representations in the auberges. The knights, to show their contempt for the Jesuits, dressed up one of their number in the sombre garb of the Society of Jesus, and sent him into the public streets during the carnival. The Fathers complained to the Grand Master, and on the morning of the 8th March, the knight Salvatico, an Italian, was arrested and conveyed to the fortress of St. Elmo. One hour after the arrest of Salvatico, the whole body of the knights, accompanied by an immense concourse of people, attacked the Jesuits' convent, and having entered the sacred premises, unceremoniously threw the whole of the furniture out of the windows into the streets. The Fathers would have been treated in the same way if they had not prudently concealed themselves. From the Jesuits' convent the crowd proceeded to the Castle of St. Elmo, where they demanded the release of Salvatico, and their demand was instantly granted by the governor. Flushed with success, the next move was to the Grand Master's palace. In spite of the guards, the ringleaders of the mob forced their way into the Grand Master's presence, and demanded the instant

expulsion of the Jesuits from the island. The demand was rejected with scorn. Instantly shouts rose on all sides, "Down with Lascaris! long live the Prior Gattinara!" Upon this the elder knights, who held offices within the palace, crowded round the Grand Master and requested him to yield to the popular clamour, urging upon him that he must either surrender the Jesuit Fathers or give up his own office to his rival, Gattinara. Their entreaties prevailed. Two hours before sunset a ship left the harbour of Valletta, having on board the eleven Jesuit priests who had been the cause of all the commotion. In a few days they were all safely landed at Civita Vecchia, whence they pursued their way to Rome; and in the course of a few months, when the rage of the knights and of the Maltese people had abated, they slunk back one by one, and established themselves once more in their convent at Malta.

Another event of some importance during the magistracy of Lascaris was the capture of the great galleon, which even now, after the lapse of more than two hundred years, is spoken of with great enthusiasm by the people of Malta.

It was during the month of September, 1644, that six of the galleys of the Order, under the command of the knight Boisbuodran, were cruising in the Levant. When about seventy miles distant from Rhodes, they perceived an Ottoman squadron, and amongst the larger ships one of immense size, a galleon, capable, according to the historian Del Pozzo, of containing six thousand quarters of wheat. At once the signal was made to give chase. The Turkish ships disdained to flee, and soon the two squadrons came within gun-shot of each other. Four out of the six galleys, disregarding the smaller ships altogether, closed round the great galleon, and after a tremendous conflict, which lasted seven hours and in which the commander Boisbuodran was killed, the flag of the Order of St. John was seen waving from the mainmast of the monster ship. The Turks had two hundred killed and a very considerable number

wounded; the knights lost nearly four hundred between killed and wounded. The prize, however, was a valuable one. The cargo on board the galleon was worth an immense sum of money, and amongst the prisoners taken were three hundred and fifty slaves and thirty women of the highest rank. The history of one of these Turkish ladies, many years afterwards, excited the curiosity of all Europe. At the time of her capture she was young and beautiful, and she had with her an infant child, who was carried into slavery along with herself. The father of that child was the Sultan Ibrahim. The child, educated under the direction of the Grand Master of Malta, subsequently became a Dominican monk. What effect the child's conversion had on the mother we are not informed; whether she ever conformed to the Christian religion or not does not appear to have been ascertained, but it is certain that she never revisited her native country and never returned to the seclusion of the Sultan's harem.*

Amongst the works of public utility undertaken by Lascaris, one of the most important was the extension of the quays, which the increased commerce of the island had rendered necessary. In order to accomplish this, the tunnel still known as the "Mina Lascaris" was bored, and the splendid quays were built which stretch towards the Marsa at the head of the Great Harbour of Malta. About the same time the Lazaretto was built on a small island in the harbour called Marsamuscetto.

In 1645 rumours of invasion were again heard, and new expenses had to be incurred by the Government. The preparations that were made for resistance were this time on a large scale. All the old men and many of the women and children were sent over to Alicata, in Sicily, and eighteen

* See the "Life of Father Domenico di San Tommaso, formerly Sultan Osman or Othman, son of Ibrahim, Emperor of the Turks." Naples, 1689.

thousand men capable of bearing arms were reviewed by the Grand Master. A strange incident is related as having occurred at this time. Notabile being thought incapable of defence, it was resolved to abandon it and concentrate the troops in and around Valletta. A large brass cannon had been mounted on the ramparts at Notabile, and the Grand Master, considering that it would be of greater use on the bastions of Valletta, gave orders that it should be removed, and an iron gun substituted for it; but when the artillerymen who had been sent upon this duty were preparing to obey the Grand Master's orders, they were suddenly attacked by a body of infuriated women, who declared that the brass gun should remain where it was, as being absolutely necessary to the defence of the town. Before the gun could be removed the Bishop had to interfere, and to request that as a personal favour to himself the artillerymen should be permitted to carry out their orders. The women yielded, though unwillingly, to the wishes of the Bishop; but the next day the Grand Master, on hearing of the circumstance, ordered several of the women who had taken a prominent part in the attack to be punished. This little incident has never been forgotten. The women of Malta never speak of Lascaris except in terms of contempt, and when they wish to describe a man, ungainly in his appearance and uncouth in his manners, they say of him, "He is a perfect Lascaris."

As on every former occasion since the great siege in the days of La Vallette, the Turks only made a feint of attacking the island. When Lascaris had made every preparation that prudence or wisdom could suggest, a signal was made one morning that two hundred Turkish ships were bearing down on the island; but they passed on, and instead of attacking Malta they blockaded Candia, then in the hands of the Venetians.

The expenses incurred by Lascaris not only emptied the

island treasury, but left the Government in debt to the amount of half a million of scudi (£41,000). All the plate in the Grand Master's palace and in the auberges of the knights was melted down to defray the ordinary expenses of the Government; but this hardly sufficed to meet the expenditure for a single week. The inhabitants were starving, and looked for help to the Grand Master, who was unable to give any assistance. To add to the universal distress a plague broke out, but precautions having been taken in time, it did not spread, and we are credibly informed that only twenty persons died of it. In the midst of all these disasters Lascaris died, on the 14th August, 1657, at the very advanced age of ninety-seven years. He had governed the Order twenty-one years, the greater part of which had been years of incessant labour and of severe mental anxiety. During his long career Lascaris had not learned the art of obtaining popular favour. Of all the Grand Masters who ruled over Malta few were more heartily and more universally detested than Lascaris.

MARTIN DE REDIN, 1657.—The successor of Lascaris was the knight Martin de Redin, a native of Arragon, who had been successively Prior of Navarre and Viceroy of Sicily. He is described as a man not only of noble birth, but of elevated character—the very type of a true knight; and, like the illustrious Chevalier Bayard, "*sans peur et sans reproche.*" His election to the office of Grand Master had been resolved upon twenty-one years before; but French influence had prevailed in the Councils of the Order, and Lascaris was called to fill the magisterial chair. Redin, disappointed and mortified, retired to Spain, where he lived for some years, until he was sent to Sicily as Viceroy. The appointment of Redin to the office of Grand Master was hailed with great satisfaction in Malta. Being a Spaniard, and having almost absolute authority in Sicily, he made arrangements for the immediate supply of provisions, and saved the people of Malta from famine and its

usual attendant, pestilence. There is a couplet still in common use amongst the people of Malta, which records the fact that peace and plenty marked his reign :—

"Sultano de Redin
Il frumento sei tarin."*

In order to guard the coast of Malta, and prevent the Turks from effecting a sudden landing on those parts of the island distant from Valletta, De Redin proposed to the Council the construction, at his own expense, of fourteen watch-towers at reasonable distances from each other. The Council gladly acceded to the Grand Master's proposal, and in less than twelve months the towers were erected. These towers are still to be seen by the traveller who approaches Malta from the north and north-west. They are now occupied by men of good character, who have been pensioned off from the Royal Malta Fencible Artillery, and are used as signal towers and telegraph stations.

The war which had so long been waged between France and Spain was brought to a close in the spring of 1660. The rejoicings in Malta at the proclamation of peace were very great; but in the midst of the festivities, in which all classes of the people were indulging, the Grand Master was taken ill and died. De Redin had only governed the Order two years and a half. He was seventy years of age when he died, regretted and beloved by all.

ANNET DE CLERMONT GESSAN, 1660.—The Bailiff of Leon, Annet de Clermont Gessan, a Frenchman, was appointed to succeed De Redin. He had passed his life in the midst of camps, and bore on his person many a scar which told of hair-breadth escapes on the battle-field. At the time of his election he was suffering from the effects of some of his severe wounds, and, four months after, he died, at the age of seventy-three.

* When De Redin was Sultan (or Governor) corn was only six taris (tenpence) a measure.

RAPHAEL COTONER, 1660.—Once more the Grand Master's chair was vacant, and Raphael Cotoner, the Bailiff of Majorca, was elected to fill it. His reign was a short one, with nothing of any consequence to mark it. Several public works, commenced under Lascaris, and continued under De Redin, were completed by Raphael Cotoner, and after a brief career of three years and eight months, he died at the age of sixty-three, to be succeeded by his brother. Of the foreign events during the period of Raphael Cotoner's magistracy it is recorded that four hundred Maltese and seventy knights, under the command of the Cavaliere Montenegro, fought valiantly against the Turks in the island of Candia.

NICHOLAS COTONER, 1663.—On the 23rd October, 1663, Nicholas Cotoner was elected to succeed his brother Raphael. The year after his accession the Maltese distinguished themselves by their valiant conduct in Africa. M. Miège, in his "History of Malta," gives the following account of the expedition, in which the brave islanders had an opportunity of displaying their prowess:—"Louis XIV.,' he says, "wishing to repress the audacity of the Barbary corsairs, who occasionally ravaged even the coasts of Provence, prepared an expedition with a view to establish a colony at Gigeri, on the coast of Algiers, and to form a harbour in which the ships of France might find shelter. The king requested the assistance of the galleys of the Order; and accordingly, several galleys, having on board five hundred of the natives of Malta, under the command of eighty knights, were sent to join the French squadron, which was commanded by the Duke of Beaufort. On the 23rd July the whole fleet arrived at Gigeri. The Moors were drawn up to prevent a landing. Orders were at once given to disembark; and the Maltese battalion was the first to get on shore, and to bear the brunt of the battle with the Moors. The galleys then took up a position from which, with their heavy guns, they were able to effect a breach in the walls of the town, and the

Maltese sailers, landing at an opportune moment, were the first to plant the flag of the Order on the ramparts. At last, after several conflicts, in which the Maltese displayed great bravery and rendered important services, the galleys returned to Malta, leaving the French in possession of the place. The success of the expedition was in a great measure due to the skill and bravery of the Maltese."

Another expedition was undertaken at the request of the Pope, who sent to ask for help for the Venetians against the Turks. During the reign of Raphael Cotoner, as already stated, four hundred Maltese and seventy knights were sent to Candia. Four hundred more were now sent, and sixty-two knights, under the command of the knight Hector la Tour Mauburg. A brilliant defence of the island was made, the Maltese being entrusted with the duty of repelling the attack made on the bastion of St. Andrew. But the long-continued efforts of the Venetians, aided by the troops of France and by the valiant Knights of St. John, with their Maltese retainers, all proved unavailing, and Candia, the stronghold of the Archipelago, fell into the hands of the Turks, who have remained in possession of it ever since that fatal month of September, 1669.

Every one who has visited Malta has seen the fortifications known as the Cotonera lines. The construction of these lines has been accurately described by Colonel Porter, to whose "History of the Fortress of Malta" I am indebted for the following extract:—

"The Grand Master Nicholas Cotoner, partly with a view to adding further security to the Convent, but more, perhaps, with the hope of immortalising his name by the construction of so stupendous a work, proposed the erection of a line of great extent, which should secure the harbours, strengthen the fronts of the Bourg and Isola, and give an extensive place of shelter for the inhabitants of the country in case of a descent. He called in Count Valperga, then chief engineer to the Duke of Savoy, to

consult with him upon his new design, and also to superintend the completion of the other unfinished works, more especially the Floriana front, which was still in a very imperfect state.

"Valperga arrived in Malta on the 9th February, 1670, and having carefully examined the site of the two towns, the heights of Santa Margarita and the surrounding country, formed the opinion that the security of the harbour imperatively demanded the entire occupation of those heights by a work of defence. He produced, therefore, a plan not very different from that of Cardinal Fiorenzola, but more extended; in which, having made use of that part already commenced, he added such portions as would connect the fronts of Isola and the Bourg. This project, however, was by no means sufficiently grand and stupendous to satisfy the magnificent ideas of the Grand Master, who was not to be contented with the completion of a work designed by his predecessors, and he insisted on the production of some new plan, far more extensive. Thus urged, Valperga was not long ere he presented his Eminence with a second; which, enclosing the whole of the Margarita heights within its limits, rested on the extremities of the ditches of Senglea and Vittoriosa. This new line consisted of eight large bastions and two demi-bastions, forming together an enceinte not far short of five thousand yards in length.

"This project was precisely suited to the taste of the Grand Master, and he warmly approved of the entire detail. The other members of the Convent were, however, by no means so cordial in the matter, and a very strong feeling of dissent speedily manifested itself. Cotoner was possessed of sufficient influence in his Council to carry his point; and the construction of the new lines being decided on, to the exclusion of all other works, the Grand Master laid the first stone in the bastion of St. Nicholas on the 28th August, 1670, with the same pomp and ceremony as that with which the city of Valletta had been commenced."

The construction of the Cotonera lines was carried on vigorously for ten years, until the death of Cotoner, when the treasury having been completely exhausted, the work was suspended. Of late years, however, the lines have been extended and strengthened by the British Government.

In 1676, whilst the Grand Master was making every effort to push forward the construction of the Cotonera lines, a plague broke out in Malta. Upwards of eleven thousand persons fell victims to it in the course of six months, the physicians being completely powerless in the presence of the malady. The cessation of the plague was attributed, as usual in Roman Catholic countries, to the direct interposition of the Virgin Mary, and a magnificent chapel was erected to her memory in commemoration of her supposed successful interference in behalf of the people of Malta.

In order to encourage and facilitate the study of medicine, with a view to render the physicians of the island more efficient in case of the outbreak of a similar epidemic, the Grand Master founded, in 1676, a school of medicine and practical anatomy, which at the present day is maintained by the British Government in a remarkable state of efficiency.

Before the plague, the population of the islands of Malta and Gozo amounted, it is said, to sixty thousand.

Nicholas Cotoner died on the 29th April, 1680, at the age of seventy-five, having ruled the Order sixteen years and a half. Dr. Vassallo says of him that he was "a generous and splendid man, but too self-opinionated. He listened to no counsels, and would brook no opposition. He was flattered, but not beloved, by his brethren."

CHAPTER X.

MALTA UNDER THE KNIGHTS OF ST. JOHN.—GREGORY CARAFFA TO FERDINAND DE HOMPESCH. 1680 TO 1798.

GREGORY CARAFFA, 1680.—The Council having assembled in the Cathedral of St. John on the 2nd May, 1680, elected as Grand Master Gregory Caraffa, a Neapolitan.

In September of the following year news arrived in Malta of the birth of a Dauphin of France, in consequence of which the Grand Master permitted a second carnival, and for three days the whole population indulged in unbounded revelry and licentiousness.

In 1684 a league was formed between the Emperor of Germany, the King of Poland, and the Venetian Republic, to resist the growing power of the Turkish empire. The Order of St. John was subsequently received into the league, and a battalion of nine hundred soldiers, to whom were added one hundred knights, was sent to the Morea. After taking part in several engagements in the Morea, the Maltese battalion was ordered to Castelnuovo, where, under the command of the knight D'Herbestein, it so distinguished itself as to attract the special notice of the Doge of Venice. A letter dated 9th October, 1687, written by the Doge to the Grand Master Caraffa, in which the valour of the Maltese battalion is highly extolled, may be seen amongst the MSS. in the Public Library of Malta.

In 1688, a year memorable in the annals of England, an English fleet cast anchor in the Great Harbour of Malta, con-

sisting of seven ships. The admiral in command of the fleet was the Duke of Grafton, a natural son of Charles II. The usual salutes having been fired, a difficulty arose on a point of etiquette between the English admiral and the Grand Master. The admiral claimed the title of *Highness*, but the Grand Master would bestow no higher title upon him than *Your Grace*. A personal interview between them was thus rendered impossible; and communication was carried on through the intervention of a third person. A young lad of fourteen, however, without standing on ceremony, one day went on shore, and visited the Grand Master in his palace. He was Henry Fitzjames, a natural son of James II. The Grand Master received him most graciously, and presented him with a magnificent cross, valued at upwards of £400 sterling.

An account of this visit of the English fleet to Malta was written by a clergyman, who served as chaplain on board the Duke of Grafton's ship. The work is still extant, but very rare.

This was the only event of any importance which occurred during the administration of Caraffa. He governed for nine years and a half, and died on the 21st July, 1690, at the age of seventy-six.

Gregory Caraffa was generally esteemed by the Maltese people on account of his amiability and the urbanity of his manners; but he is accused of partiality and favouritism in his distribution of public offices, and he is charged with having destroyed some of the ancient monuments of the island, in order to obtain materials for the embellishment of the auberge belonging to the language of Italy.

ADRIAN VIGNACOURT, 1690.—On the 24th July, 1690, the Council elected as Grand Master Adrian Vignacourt, Grand Treasurer of the Order, and nephew of the late illustrious Alophius Vignacourt. He commenced his administration by granting liberal pensions to the widows and children of the

brave men who had fallen in the wars that for several years had been carried on in the Levant between the Venetians and the Turks.

In the month of January, 1693, a terrible earthquake occurred in Malta, and did very considerable damage to many of the buildings, both public and private. The shocks lasted several days, and caused great alarm. Even now, after the lapse of nearly two centuries, a *Te Deum* is annually sung in the Cathedral of Notabile, in commemoration of the great earthquake. The cathedral was completely destroyed, but was rebuilt in the course of a few years.

This was the only event worth recording during the administration of Adrian Vignacourt. He governed for six years and a half, and died on the 4th February, 1697, at the age of seventy-nine. Three days after his successor was elected.

Raymond Perellos, 1697.—Raymond Perellos, Bailiff of Negropont, a native of Arragon, was appointed to succeed Adrian Vignacourt. During his long reign of twenty-three years nothing occurred of any political importance in Malta, and hardly an incident of any kind sufficiently grave to attract the attention of the historian. One disaster, however, which befell the Order deserves notice. A large galley, commanded by the knight Spinola, the admiral of the Order, whilst engaged in an action with a Turkish ship-of-war, suddenly sprang a leak, and went down with five hundred soldiers and sailors. The admiral and a few of the men escaped with difficulty.

The Turkish ships-of-war against which the galleys of the Order had so frequently to fight were so large and so well manned, that Perellos thought it advisable to construct ships which should be able to maintain the *prestige* of the Order at sea. He therefore caused a large ship, called the *St. Raymond*, to be built at his own expense; and three others, called *St. John*, *St. James*, and *St. Catherine*, at the expense of the

public treasury. The expense thus incurred was amply repaid by the successful issue of several combats against the Turks. Shortly after the *St. John* was launched, she encountered three Tunisian vessels off the coast of Africa, and succeeded in capturing one of them—a fifty-gun ship, having on board a crew of three hundred and seventy officers and men. The year after she rendered a service still more signal. Salmon, in a work entitled, "The Present Condition of all the Countries in the World," thus records the circumstance. He says:—"This ship carried succours into Oran, which then belonged to the Spaniards, and was besieged by the Emperor of Morocco. Sailing through the galling fire of a large Algerine squadron, she landed three hundred men and twenty knights in safety. The siege was raised, and the whole glory of the enterprise was ascribed to the brave soldiers of the Order by the Pope, who wrote a letter full of praises and congratulations."

Perellos established a kind of prætorian guard, called the *Guardia Magistrale*, for the protection of the person of the Grand Master, and for the purpose of adding *éclat* to his office. He built the grain stores called *della barriera*, and the Chapel of the Saviour; and he presented to the Order the splendid damask tapestry still to be seen in the Cathedral of St. John, which had cost him nearly £4,000 sterling. On the 20th January, 1720, he died, at the age of eighty-four, having ruled the Order twenty-three years.

MARK ANTHONY ZONDADARI, 1720.—Perellos was succeeded by an Italian knight, Marc Antonio Zondadari, brother of the celebrated cardinal of the same name, and nephew of Pope Alexander VII. On being invested with the magisterial dignity, he drew down upon himself the enmity of the people of Malta. It had been customary for the Grand Master to swear that he would defend the ancient rights and national privileges of the Maltese. This Zondadari refused to do. "The people had no rights," he said, "and no privileges;" and "he

refused to invoke the name of God to a falsehood." After such a declaration as this, one might have expected that his government would have been harsh and tyrannical. It was absolute, but far from tyrannical. His heart was kind, his feelings were warm, and he treated both the members of the Order and the people with genuine courtesy. But Zondadari had no idea of constitutional government, and scorned the very thought of the *profanum vulgus* having any voice in the administration of affairs. He had been all his life a soldier and a monk. As a soldier, he regarded obedience to superior authority as the first of virtues; as a monk, he had no sympathy with the feelings of the people, no care for the welfare of any but the members of his own Order. He was a scholar and a patron of literary men; and, by his kindness and his liberality, he succeeded gradually in re-establishing himself in the favour of the people of Malta, notwithstanding the bold declaration of absolutism with which he entered upon the duties of his office. Two books of which he was the author are said to be still extant. The first is entitled "A Short Account of the Sacred Military Order of the Knights Hospitallers." The second is an exposition of the Forty-first Psalm. Both books were printed, first in Paris, and then in Padua. They are spoken of as admirable both as regards their contents and their style. His reign was a short one. If it had been longer, it would probably have been distinguished in the annals of the Order; but he was cut off in the month of June, 1722, at the age of sixty-three, after having held the reins of office for two years and a half.

The Bailiff of Acre, Anthony Manoel de Vilhena, a Portuguese knight, succeeded him.

Anthony Manoel de Vilhena, 1722. — Vilhena had no sooner entered on his duties than all his energies were taxed by alarming news which came to Malta from Constantinople. Several Turkish slaves having been liberated by the knights

on payment of a ransom, and having been sent back to their own country, informed the Sultan that the number of Mohammedan slaves in Malta was nearly as large as that of the whole population, and that if a Turkish fleet were to appear off the island, the slaves would at once rebel against their masters, put them to death, and deliver the island to the Ottoman power. The Sultan believed this story, and prepared to take advantage of this opportunity of getting possession of an island which had now for two hundred years set the whole power of Islam at defiance. But Manoel de Vilhena, like his predecessor, La Vallette, had his spies at Constantinople, who sent him intelligence of this intended movement in due time. The Turkish fleet, consisting of ten ships, appeared off the island; but the slaves had been secured by order of the Grand Master, and were closely immured in dungeons, whilst the military posts were all guarded by the knights and the island militia.

Whilst the Grand Master quietly awaited the attack, a despatch reached him from the Turkish admiral, who demanded the instant liberation of every Mohammedan slave, and threatened a bombardment in case of refusal. Vilhena replied that he was willing to liberate all the slaves, but only on condition of a ransom being paid, or an exchange effected with any Christian slaves who might be in the possession of Turks. The admiral, mortified to find that the promised insurrection had not taken place, and hearing that the Grand Master had effectually prevented a servile war by placing all the slaves under lock and key, thought proper to decline the proposal for exchange or ransom, and at the same time to avoid fighting; so he sailed away with his fleet the next day. Thus, by the vigilance of Vilhena's emissaries at Constantinople, and by his own energy, a dreadful calamity was averted, and Malta was once more saved from falling into the hands of foes who would have destroyed in it every vestige of liberty and every trace of Christianity.

As soon as Vilhena was able to do so, he directed his attention to the strengthening and to the repair of the fortifications. He restored the bastions of Vittoriosa, and he erected the bulwark called San Salvador. But the work which has preserved his name alive in Malta is the splendid fort which stands on the island in the Marsamuscetto, exactly opposite the entrance to the Quarantine Harbour of Malta. In the centre of the principal square, within the fort, he placed a bronze statue of himself, which stood there until very recently, and which, whilst it ornamented the square, served to remind the military occupants of the fort of the illustrious Grand Master who had planned and built it; but Sir Gaspard le Marchant, when Governor of Malta, with very questionable taste, thought proper to remove Manoel de Vilhena's statue from the position in which it had stood for a hundred and fifty years, and to place it in the square of the Public Library in Valletta. The fort was called, after its designer and builder, Fort Manoel; but, with inexcusable ignorance, the English residents of Malta always speak of it as Fort *Manual*, and by this latter name it is mentioned in a book written a few years ago by a traveller who spent some six weeks in Malta, and who, having collected a little of the gossip which passes for "information" with those who are too lazy to undergo the labour of literary research, gave it to the world as an accurate account of Malta.

The construction of Fort Manoel had scarcely been completed when Vilhena was suddenly taken ill. On the 12th December, 1736, he died. His reign lasted fourteen years and a half. It is not the least illustrious reign in the annals of the renowned Order of St. John. Vilhena was succeeded by Raymond d'Espuig, Bailiff of Majorca, and a native of that island.

Raymond d'Espuig, 1736.—Of D'Espuig little or nothing is to be said. He was one of those men who occasionally rise to the surface of the troubled waters of society by virtue of

a buoyancy which is the consequence of emptiness—men without energy, without character, without sufficient resolution to do anything, lest the action which they contemplate may displease somebody, and who are therefore universally regarded as safe men. D'Espuig was a man of whom nobody had ever heard, who had attempted nothing, who had done nothing, and who therefore, when several claimants arose for the office of Grand Master, was elected because of the neutrality of his character, which made him acceptable to all parties. He lived; he died. This is the sum total of his biography.* After being in office four years, he fortunately expired, on the 15th January, 1741, at the age of seventy-one, leaving the magisterial chair again vacant.

EMANUEL PINTO, 1741.—The Council of the Order amply atoned for the election of D'Espuig by appointing as his successor Emanuel Pinto de Fonzeca, Bailiff of Acre, a native of Portugal.

The first years of Pinto's government were not marked by any important event. His attention was directed to the improvement of the social condition of the people, to the advancement of commerce, and to the repair and erection of public buildings. The results of his energy and vigilance are seen on all sides in Malta even at the present day. He enlarged and greatly improved his own palatial residence. He established a printing press, which, however, he retained strictly under his own control; he built the warehouses on the quay at the Great Harbour, which are still known as the "Pinto Stores;" he erected the Court of Justice long known as the *Castellania;* he finished the fort of Chambray in Gozo; he built, in the neighbourhood of Fort St. Elmo, a place in

* Dr. Vassallo says of him, "Nulla di rimarchevole sotto il magistero di D'Espuig, il quale, a quanto leggesi, anzichè *governare* fu *governato*" (There was nothing remarkable under the magistracy of D'Espuig, who, so far as we have read of him, instead of governing, was governed).

which women might take refuge during a siege or attack on the island by the Turks; he planted mulberry trees in different parts of the island, with a view to encourage the production of the silk-worm and the manufacture of silk; he made a new road to the village of Paula; he armed, at his own expense, three large galleys and a frigate; and he commenced the construction of a dock in which the vessels of the Order might be refitted.

Pinto was naturally proud of all that he had undertaken and accomplished for the benefit of the island over which he had been called to rule. He knew and felt his own importance, and he assumed, perhaps rather egotistically, the title of Most Eminent Highness, and engraved on his coat of arms a crown surmounted by the Malta cross. Few who know anything about his history will be disposed to deny him the honour of bearing this title, and wearing this significant device.

The even tenor of Pinto's life was now disturbed by a remarkable event. The story is a strange one, bordering closely on the romantic.

Mustafà, Governor of Rhodes, had been ordered to convey from Rhodes to the coast of Asia Minor an envoy from the Sultan. Having obeyed the order, and safely landed the envoy, Mustafà set sail on his return to Rhodes in the month of January, 1748. The crew consisted of about a hundred and twenty men, of whom twenty were Maltese, about the same number Greeks, and the remainder Turks and Arabs. Among the Arabs was a young man of violent temper and determined character, named Kara Mehmet, who had been punished, as he conceived unjustly, for some breach of discipline. This Mehmet resolved in revenge to kill the Governor, who was also captain of the ship, and he communicated his intentions to the Maltese and Greeks on board, who, being slaves, were glad of a chance of escaping from slavery, and perhaps of returning to their native country. At a given signal the Greeks and Maltese

attacked the rest of the crew, killed some, threw some overboard, and disarmed the remainder. Mehmet rushed into the Governor's cabin to satiate his revenge, but a Maltese youth interposed, and the Governor's life was saved. In one brief half-hour the whole affair was over. Mustafà found himself a prisoner in his cabin, and the vessel's course being altered, she bore down for Malta.

On the 1st February the mutineers were received, on their arrival in Malta, by the Grand Master and his staff, and treated with all the honour due to heroes. Mustafà having been brought on shore, was received with the respect due to his rank, but was detained a prisoner in the Castle of St. Elmo. The Bailiff of Bocage, Ambassador of France, visited him, together with several of the most distinguished members of the Order. The French Ambassador was particularly struck with the noble bearing of Mustafà, and in an interview with the Grand Master he requested that the illustrious prisoner might be permitted to live in a house near the city of Valletta, instead of being confined within the walls of St. Elmo. Pinto, unwilling to appear to treat a prisoner whom misfortune had thrown into his hands ungenerously, granted the request, and Mustafà made use of his liberty to enter into a correspondence with some friends in Constantinople, a slave named Ibrahim acting as his secretary and confidential agent.

Meanwhile, Kara Mehmet, the author of all Mustafà's misfortunes, was in great favour with the Grand Master, who lost no opportunity of trying to persuade him to become a Christian. Mehmet yielded to the Grand Master's entreaties, declared himself a Christian, and was baptized, but only that he might with greater ease carry out a diabolical project which he had formed. As a Mohammedan he was vexed to think that he had in a moment of anger placed a Mohammedan of rank like Mustafà in the power of a Christian ruler, and he determined to atone for his conduct by proposing to Mustafà the massacre of Pinto

and his knights, and the surrender of the island to the Ottoman Government. The plan was carefully arranged. A slave, who was in a position of trust in the palace, was to strike off the Grand Master's head, and this was to be the signal for a general massacre of the knights. It was necessary, however, to the success of the conspiracy that the soldiers on duty at the palace should be induced to take part in it. One of them, a Maltese, on becoming acquainted with the plot, resolved to reveal it, and going secretly by night to the palace, he informed the Grand Master of the baseness of Mehmet. Pinto immediately took steps to prevent the success of the conspiracy. In the morning the news of the intended massacre spread in all directions, and an immense crowd surrounded the house of Mustafà, and demanded his instant death. But Pinto generously protected him, and instead of delivering him to an infuriated populace, he sent him back to the Castle of St. Elmo, where he was well guarded. Thirty-eight of the ringleaders of this conspiracy were put to death, and amongst them Kara Mehmet. Mustafà, in spite of all the evidence which showed clearly his connection with the plot, was permitted to live.

After this attempt the Grand Master's body-guard was composed exclusively of Maltese. The compliment was well deserved, for the people of Malta had always proved faithful to the Order and zealous in the discharge of every duty entrusted to them.

In 1749, Charles Bourbon, King of Naples, to whom Naples and Sicily had been ceded by his father, Philip V. of Spain, gave notice to the Grand Master that he would shortly send to Malta an ecclesiastic, who should visit all the convents in Malta, and make a report to him on the condition of the Order and on the administration of the government of Malta. This the King of Naples considered he had a right to do, as the representative of Charles V., who had governed Malta through

the Viceroy of Sicily, and had always regarded it as part of his Italian territory. Pinto naturally resisted this interference with his authority by the King of Naples. He was determined, he said, to be the supreme head of the Order and the independent ruler of Malta and Gozo, and he would acknowledge no European sovereign as lord paramount. The King of Naples, however, insisting on his right, the matter was referred for decision to the principal courts of Europe, who all agreed in maintaining the absolute independence of the Grand Master; and the threatened visitation of the convents was never carried out.

As soon as Pinto had time to collect his thoughts after his contest with the King of Naples, he commenced the formation of the Public Library, which still exists at Malta, and which has proved of such signal service to the educated portion of the Maltese people. Ever since the year 1612 there had been a library in Malta, containing some very valuable works, but only the members of the Order had access to it. Pinto removed the volumes to a commodious building, and threw the library open to the public. The English traveller who now visits Malta may perhaps be surprised to learn that in so small an island a library exists to which every respectable person has free access without fee or payment of any kind, and that the library now contains more than thirty-five thousand volumes, including the most valuable works of modern times, and copies of the principal magazines and other periodicals.

In 1768 Malta attracted the attention of a country which was beginning to be powerful in Europe. Russia was at war with Turkey. The assistance of the Order of St. John was sought by the Russian Government, but refused at the instigation of France, which had for years past manifested an ever-increasing jealousy at the growing power of Russia. The Grand Master, however, although declining to take part in the war against Turkey, gave shelter and provisions to the

Russian fleet under the command of Admiral Spiritoff. The Russian admiral, as his ships lay in the splendid harbour of Malta, could not but perceive what an immense advantage to his country the possession of such a harbour would be; and he at once communicated his views to the Empress Catherine II. No time was lost in sending to Malta secret agents of the Russian Court, who suggested to the Maltese the possibility of getting rid of the Order of St. John, and who represented that Malta, under the government of Russia, could not fail to become the richest and most powerful island in the Mediterranean. One obstacle to the success of their scheme, however, the agents of the Russian Government were not able to overcome. The Sovereign of Russia was the acknowledged head of the Russo-Greek Church. That Church denied the supremacy of the Pope. The people of Malta were deeply attached to the person and to the religion of the Roman Pontiff. The overtures of Russia, therefore, wherever they were made, were rejected; and the agents of Catherine II., after earnestly prosecuting their secret mission for months, retired without having excited the suspicions of the Grand Master, and without having made a single convert of any importance or respectability.

The same year (1768) was remarkable for another event, which we must not pass over. I have already related how, during the Grand-mastership of Lascaris, in 1635, the indignant people of Malta drove out the Jesuits, and how the expelled Fathers gradually returned, and resumed their position in the island. In 1768 they were expelled again, and a solemn decree was registered by the Grand Master Pinto, forbidding them ever to return to Malta. Their convent was seized, and all their property confiscated, and from that day to the present moment has not been restored to them. The expulsion of the Jesuits was the last important act of Pinto's public life. He lived to be ninety-two years of age; and on

the 23rd January, 1773, he died, having ruled with great distinction for thirty-two years.*

XIMENES DE TEXADA, 1773.—Great anxiety prevailed throughout Malta on the death of Emanuel Pinto. The votes of the Council were divided between the Bailiff St. Simon and the Prior Ximenes. The latter was the favourite of the people,

* It was in 1770, during the Grand-mastership of Emanuel Pinto, that Brydone, the traveller, visited Malta in company with Mr. Fullarton. Brydone, in his letter to Mr. William Beckford, dated Malta, June 7th, 1770, gives the following account of the Grand Master:—"His name is Pinto, and of a Portuguese family. He has now been at the head of this singular little State for upwards of thirty years. He received us with great politeness, and was highly pleased to find that some of us had been in Portugal. He mentioned the intimate commercial relations that had so long subsisted between our nations, and expressed his desire of being of service to us, and of rendering our stay in the island as agreeable as possible. He is a clear-headed, sensible, little old man, which at so advanced a period of life is very uncommon. Although he is considerably upwards of ninety he retains all the faculties of his mind in perfection. He has no Minister, but manages everything himself, and has immediate information of the most minute occurrences. He walks up and down stairs, and even to church, without assistance, and has the appearance as if he would still live for many years. His household attendance and Court are all very princely, and as Grand Master of Malta he is more absolute and possesses more power than most sovereign princes. His titles are Serene Highness and Eminence; and as he has the disposal of all lucrative offices, he makes of his Councils what he pleases; besides, in all the Councils that compose the jurisdiction of this little nation, he himself presides, and has two votes. Since he was chosen Grand Master he has already given away one hundred and twenty-six commanderies, some of them worth upwards of £2,000 a year, besides priories and other offices of profit. He has the disposal of twenty-one commanderies and one priory every five years, and as there are always a number of expectants he is very much courted."

In another letter Brydone describes a scene which he witnessed. I quote his description as giving an idea of the naval power as well as an insight into the private life of the Knights of St. John. He says:—"The show is now finished, and has afforded us great entertainment. It was the departure of a Maltese squadron to assist the French against the Bey of Tunis, who, it seems, has fallen under the displeasure of the Grand Monarque because he refused to deliver up without ransom the Corsican slaves that were taken before the French were in possession of that island. The squadron consisted of three galleys—the largest with nine hundred men, each of the others with seven hundred—three galliots, and several *scamparias* (runaways), so called from their exceeding swiftness. These immense bodies were all worked by oars, and moved with great regularity. The admiral went first, and the rest in order, according to their dignity. The sea was crowded with boats, and the ramparts and fortifications were filled with the company. The port resounded on all sides with the discharge of heavy artillery, which was

and by his persuasive manners he contrived to turn the scale against his opponent even in such an assembly as the Council of the Order of St. John, little accustomed to regard the popular will. He was elected. Great expectations were indulged in, only to be disappointed. Predictions of a glorious career were uttered on all sides, only to be falsified by the events of his life.

The first public act of Ximenes was to reduce the expenditure, which, during the administration of Pinto, had been lavish; but he reduced it by lowering the salaries of officials in the various departments of Government, and by dismissing some of the professors from the University, to save their stipends. Then he introduced a game law, previously unknown in the island, reserving the right of shooting rabbits to himself and any knights to whom he should grant permission. He next interfered with some of the privileges of the clergy, and made an enemy of the Bishop, Monsignor Pellerano. Not content with making himself odious in these various ways, he placed a heavy tax on corn, which pressed hard, of course, on the poorer classes. In six months after his accession the people, in every corner of the island, were ripe for rebellion. In September, 1773, the excitement had risen to such a pitch that Ximenes found it necessary to double his body-guard, and to keep his troops ready to suppress an insurrection, which he believed to be imminent. No rising, however, took place, and for a time everything returned to its usual course.

In the course of the following year, however, new causes of trouble arose. The commander of the Grand Master's galley

answered by the galleys and galliots as they left the harbour. As the echo is here uncommonly great, it produced a very noble effect. There were about thirty knights in each galley, making signals all the way to their mistresses, who were weeping for their departure upon the bastions; for these gentlemen pay almost as little regard to their vows of chastity as the priests and confessors do. After viewing the show from the ramparts, we took a boat and followed the squadron for some time, and did not return till long after sunset."—*Brydone's Travels in Sicily and Malta.*

ordered a man in the service of the Bishop to be flogged for having, as alleged, insulted a sailor. The Bishop, in retaliation, seized the two men who had flogged his servant by order of the captain, and had them thrown into the episcopal dungeons at Vittoriosa. The knights resented this interference of the Bishop as an insult to the Grand Master and to the Order, and rushed to the prison to release the prisoners, using at the same time threatening language to the Bishop and his clergy. The Grand Master, on hearing of the tumult, sent one of his officers with a body of men to keep the peace, and twenty of the knights were placed under arrest. The people sympathised with the knights, and were preparing to liberate them, when the Grand Master, by a timely display of force, compelled the submission of all parties. Then came an appeal to Rome. The Bishop was summoned by the Pope to answer for his conduct. He obeyed the summons. He arrived in Rome; but he never returned to Malta.

At last the patience of the people was exhausted; and, led by the clergy, they broke out into insurrection. This event is known, in the history of Malta, as the "Rebellion of the Priests."

On the night of the 9th September, 1775, a large body of priests assembled at the Tower of St. James, which commands the city of Valletta; and, by means of false keys, obtained an entrance into it. They then proceeded to the Castle of St. Elmo, which was betrayed to them by the soldiers on duty. The garrison of St. Elmo was disarmed and placed under arrest; then, the principal gate being thrown open, a large concourse of people entered the castle, and prepared to assist the priests in their resistance to the Government. In the course of a few hours the people throughout the island had declared themselves on the side of the priests; whilst the Maltese gentlemen and noblemen, who resided chiefly in Valletta, made common cause with Ximenes and the Government. The first thing that was done was to send a body of men to

obtain possession of St. James' Tower, which was done without much difficulty, as the priests, having seized it, had left hardly any one in it to defend it. Four men were found in the tower, and at once arrested. Evidently the business of making war was new to the priests. The next step was to give audience to the Bishop's chaplain, who had been sent from St. Elmo with an offer of surrender, on condition that a general amnesty should be published, and that the privileges granted to the people by the kings of Arragon and Castile should be restored. The Grand Master at once promised to accept a surrender on these conditions, insisting, however, that all who had taken possession of St. Elmo should lay down their arms before marching out, and that, until this were done, twelve of the most distinguished men in the fort should repair to the palace, there to be detained as hostages. The whole affair promised to end without bloodshed, when an unlucky incident took place. The rebels, on taking possession of St. Elmo, had placed the commander and his men under arrest. They now proceeded to liberate them; but before they had time to do so, De Guron, the commander, and fourteen of his soldiers, dashed out of the apartment in which they had been confined, shot one of the rebel priests dead, and then fired a volley into the rest. A skirmish took place, in which several were killed on both sides, but the castle remained in the hands of De Guron, who had determined that the priests should suffer dearly for depriving him of his command, and subjecting him to the indignity of an arrest.

On the following night, the four men who had been seized in St. James' Tower were brought up for trial before a hastily-assembled criminal court, and three of them were condemned to be first strangled, and then beheaded in prison. Their heads, stuck on lances, were placed on the wall of the tower, to deter others from following their example. The Grand Master then published an edict granting a general amnesty; but after

the publication of the edict he was most anxious to bring to justice the leaders and instigators of the rebellion. These, being priests, could not be tried by any but an ecclesiastical court, which could not be assembled without a decree from the Pope. Ximenes therefore took measures to obtain the decree. But before his envoy was ready to leave for Rome, the hand of death fell heavily on him. He was seventy-two years of age, and had governed two years and a half. Dr. Vassallo describes the administration of Ximenes de Texada in two words—"*Governo tristissimo.*" He died on the 4th November, 1775.

EMANUEL DE ROHAN, 1775.—If the successor of Ximenes had not been a man of a very different stamp, there is every reason to believe that the dominion of the Order of St. John in Malta would have speedily come to an end. The patience of the people had been tried beyond endurance; and all classes had resolved that they would no longer submit to the tyranny and misgovernment which they had hitherto so meekly endured. The anxiety to know who was to be the successor of Ximenes was intense; and very great satisfaction was expressed when it was announced that the choice of the Council had fallen upon Emanuel Maria de Rohan Polduc, a Frenchman, known in the history of Malta as Emanuel de Rohan, and still spoken of by the people of Malta as one of the best Grand Masters that ever presided over the Order of St. John.

The very first act of De Rohan, on learning of his appointment, was to order the three heads of the rebels to be removed at once from St. James' Tower, to liberate all political prisoners, to set free all debtors, to abolish the selfish game law passed by Ximenes, to distribute sums of money to the poor, and to grant a patient hearing to all who had any complaint to make or any claims to urge. He next established a Chamber of Commerce, regulated the price of grain, increased the salaries of the professors in the University, and opened schools for in-

struction in mathematics and navigation. To crown all these salutary measures, he assembled a General Council of the Order in the month of November, 1777, and admitted to the Council, for the first time in the history of the Order, five Maltese gentlemen of the highest respectability, permitting them to take part in all the deliberations on the same conditions as the other members.

So far De Rohan had by every one of his public acts secured the good-will of the people; but it was not long before he listened to the suggestions of evil counsellors, who persuaded him to surround himself with a body-guard of foreigners, representing to him that since the rebellion of the priests in 1775, the authority of the Grand Master was not so much regarded as it had been in the days of some of his predecessors. De Rohan accordingly enlisted twelve hundred Italian and French soldiers, who proved to be not only a source of great expense to the Government, but a source of endless jealousy and annoyance to the people.

The great act of De Rohan's life was now commenced—his revision and republication of the laws by which Malta had been governed for several centuries. The Code Rohan, revised to suit present circumstances, and confirmed by the authority of the Imperial Parliament, is still in force in Malta. The work of revision was entrusted to Giandonato Rogadeo, an eminent Italian lawyer, which of course gave umbrage to every member of the legal profession in Malta. Rogadeo's revised laws, as well as the new laws which he proposed, were objected to by every Maltese lawyer; upon which the Grand Master appointed a commission to inquire into and report upon the nature of the revised code. The commission declared the code in its revised form to be unsuited to the character and opposed to ancient privileges of the people. Rogadeo upon this resigned his office, and requested permission to return to Naples. His request was granted, and a pension was settled on him for life. The

compilation of the new laws was now entrusted to a Maltese barrister, Dr. Frederick Gatt, who called to his assistance several other lawyers, and on the 17th July, 1784, the new code received the sanction of the Council and Grand Master, and was published under the title of "Diritto Municipale di Malta."*

The same year an event of some importance took place—the establishment of a new *language*, called the Anglo-Bavarian. Charles Theodore, Elector of Bavaria, anxious that the nobility of his country should be admitted to membership in the Order of St. John, assigned to the Order the estates and other property of the suppressed Society of Jesuits, and sent two of his ministers to Malta to request that the privilege of admission to the Order should be accorded to Bavarian noblemen. The Council, after some discussion, resolved that the number of *languages*, which from the beginning had been eight, should not be increased; but that the *language* of England, which had been in abeyance for two centuries, should be revived, and that of Bavaria united to it, thus forming what was known as the Anglo-Bavarian *language*. To this arrangement the consent of the King of England, George III., was requested, and obtained without difficulty. To the possessions of the Anglo-Bavarian language were added, a few years afterwards, those of the Priorate of Poland, which had been established in 1777, and afterwards suppressed.

Du Rohan had now governed the Order wisely and well for ten years. The second decade of his government was by no means so prosperous. His pecuniary resources began to fail, commerce to languish, and the people to grow discontented. Breaches of discipline amongst the knights began to be more

* On the 10th March, 1854, during the administration of Sir William Reid, a proclamation was issued promulgating Her Majesty's Order in Council giving effect to a code of criminal laws for the island of Malta and its dependencies.

This code of criminal laws is based on the Code Rohan, modified, however, to suit the present circumstances of the population.

frequent than usual; and occasionally scandalous stories were circulated about the licentiousness and extravagance of the younger members of the Order.

About the same time a controversy arose between the Commander Dolomieu and the Bailiff Loras about the right to certain titles of honour. The Grand Master decided in favour of the latter, upon which Dolomieu set off for Rome, and laid his case before the Pope, Pius VI., who reversed De Rohan's decision, and conferred the titles upon him. This, however, was a matter of comparatively trifling importance. Dolomieu, in his interview with the Pope, had insinuated that De Rohan was anxious to cast off the authority of the Court of Rome altogether, and the Pope immediately despatched an official letter to the Grand Master, threatening to abolish the Order at once if any resistance were offered to his authority. De Rohan retaliated by immediately publishing a proclamation, which declared that no Papal bull or rescript should be of any force in the islands under his government without his own permission. The Bishop and the Inquisitor-General stood aghast at the independent position assumed by the Grand Master, who, however, nobly maintained his ground, and all through the period of his administration steadily resisted every attempt at dictation by the Court of Rome.

The affairs of Europe were now in a very critical position. The French Revolution had commenced. On the 4th August, 1789, the National Assembly of France decreed "the abolition of all feudal rights, and the suppression of all the privileges of the aristocracy." In virtue of this decree, the tithes which the Order had been in the habit of receiving from its extensive possessions in France were abolished. The Grand Master and the Council forwarded petitions to Louis XVI., soliciting his interference; but Louis XVI. was too much occupied with matters nearer home to pay any attention to a petition from Malta, and his influence over the Assembly was growing weaker

and weaker every day. The subject was, however, brought before the Assembly by M. Camus, who demanded, not the restoration of the tithes, but the complete suppression of the Order, as a privileged body inconsistent with the new Constitution, and as a clerical body which had consumed for many centuries the fruits of the industry of the poor peasantry. The Assembly, without decreeing the suppression of the Order, decreed that the possessions of the Order in France were henceforth to be regarded as the possessions of the French nation. This decree was followed by another, issued in the month of September, 1792, which declared that "the possessions of the Order of St. John in France should be sold under the same conditions as the other national demesnes." The Bailiff Foresta was sent to Paris to protest in the name of the Order against this act of robbery; and at the risk of his life he did protest against it energetically in the presence of Robespierre and his colleagues, but without effect. This occurred in the month of January, 1793. In the course of that year news arrived in Malta of the tragical end of Louis XVI.; and De Rohan, seeing that all hope of recovering the possessions of the Order was at an end, recalled Foresta from France, and submitted to the loss with dignified resignation. Not knowing what the results of the recent events in France might be, and fearing lest the island might one day have to resist the attacks of the Republicans, who were threatening the whole of Europe, De Rohan constructed, in 1793, a fort on Cape Dragut. The fort received the name of Tigné, from the engineer who designed it. It stands at the entrance of the Marsamuscetto Harbour, facing the bastions of Fort St. Elmo. The forebodings of De Rohan were soon realised. A French party was formed in Malta, having for its object the cession of the island to the Great Republic. To this party several of the native noblemen and gentlemen allied themselves, and all the French knights. De Rohan was overwhelmed with anxiety. He well knew that

the establishment of French institutions in Malta would be followed by the complete destruction of the Order of St. John; but he was quite powerless in the face of the combination that had been entered into by the promoters of French interests. His health gave way. After an illness of several months, he died on the 13th July, 1797, at the age of seventy-two. His administration lasted twenty-two years. The glory of the Order of St. John died with him. In the days of his successor —an unworthy head of an Order so illustrious in the annals of chivalry—the storm which swept over Europe carried it away with its property, and terminated the political existence of the Knights Hospitallers of St. John of Jerusalem.

FERDINAND DE HOMPESCH, 1797.—It would have been impossible to find a man less capable of ruling in times of difficulty than Hompesch; and yet both the people of Malta and the Council of the Order agreed in fixing their choice upon him. Ferdinand de Hompesch was a native of Austria, and held the office of Bailiff of Brandenburgh at the time of his election, which took place on the 17th July, 1797. He was fifty-two years of age at the time. Familiar with the Maltese language, he was friendly and affable to the people, and was consequently a great favourite with them. His election was celebrated with great rejoicings throughout the island by the native population; whilst the republican party showed equal signs of joy at the appointment of one whose known feebleness of mind ill qualified him to resist the attempts which were shortly to be made to destroy him and his Order together. He commenced his administration by bestowing large sums of money on his friends and supporters. Prudent and far-seeing men counselled him to husband his resources, and to prepare for a crisis, which was evidently approaching; but his reply was, that the treaties then in existence amongst the different powers of Europe secured the Order against all danger. Little did Hompesch think that not only political treaties, but the

most sacred and solemn compacts that had been made between individuals of the same nation, were all to be swept away soon by the ever-increasing torrent of republican fury.

Whilst Hompesch hugged himself in fancied security, the French party at Malta was maturing its plans. These plans were not the less eagerly engaged in by the partisans of Napoleon Buonaparte because the Grand Master happened to be an Austrian. It might have been supposed that an Austrian Grand Master would have kept a steady eye on the movements of an influential French party; but Hompesch seems to have exhibited all the infatuation of a man who, in spite of every warning, moves onward to certain destruction. In the month of November, 1797, three French frigates lay in the harbour of Malta. Just before, the following letters had passed between Talleyrand and Buonaparte. Buonaparte wrote as follows:—

"Passeriano, 13th Sept., 1797.

"Why do we not take possession of Malta? Admiral Brueys might very well cast anchor there, and make himself master of the place. Four hundred knights and five hundred soldiers are all that form the garrison of Valletta. The inhabitants, who number one hundred thousand, are friendly to us, and greatly disgusted with the knights. They are dying of starvation. I have purposely confiscated the possessions of the Order in Italy. With the islands of Sardinia, Malta, and Corfu, we should be masters of the whole Mediterranean."

Talleyrand replied thus:—

"Paris, 27th Sept., 1797.

"The Directory approves of your intention respecting Malta. Ever since the Order selected an Austrian to fill the office of Grand Master, the Directory has been confirmed in its suspicions that Austria was anxious to take possession of Malta. It is our interest to prevent any increase of the maritime power of Austria; and the Directory desires you to

take any measures that may be deemed advisable to prevent Malta from falling into the hands of the Austrians."

On the 14th November of the same year Buonaparte wrote again to Talleyrand:—"You will find enclosed a copy of the commission which I have given to the Citizen Poussielgue, and also a copy of my letter to our consul at Malta, Citizen Caruson. The real object of Poussielgue's mission is to put the finishing-stroke to our projects for obtaining possession of Malta."

It may be well to remark here that although Talleyrand, in his letter to Buonaparte, assigns as his reason for wishing to obtain possession of Malta that it might fall into the hands of the Austrians, his true reason has been stated by M. Thiers in his "History of the French Revolution." "Buonaparte wished," he said, "to obtain possession of Malta, because, commanding as it does the navigation of the Mediterranean, it is important as a stepping-stone to Egypt, and because it cannot but fall into the hands of the *English* unless we prevent it."

Meanwhile, a great expedition was being fitted out at Toulon; and on the 3rd June, 1798, Hompesch received a despatch from the Bailiff De Schenau, dated from Rastadt. In this despatch he was distinctly informed that the expedition which was being prepared at Toulon was intended to act against Malta and Egypt; but so little importance did he attach to the information, that he did not think it worth his while to communicate the contents of Schenau's letter to the Council. The Order was evidently doomed to destruction. It had accomplished the purpose for which Providence had raised it up. For six hundred years it had acted as a barrier to prevent the irruption of the Mohammedans into Western Europe. Nobly it had battled to check the power of the Moslem, which, except for the opposition which it so persistently offered, would have become irresistible. Now, however, the necessity for its existence

had passed away, and it fell, never to be revived. In the words of Dr. De Caro, an eminent Maltese lawyer, "The Order of Hospitallers, the association of the Church and the Sword, of war with the religious sentiment, ceased to be useful, ceased to act for the purposes for which it had originally been formed, when the conditions which had promoted its origin and development ceased. The Order was not struck to the heart by the sword of Napoleon. He merely executed the sentence that had been passed upon it. Its fate had previously been decreed by the changes which time had wrought, by the altered condition of society, by public opinion."

Early in June, 1798, a few French ships appeared off the harbour of Malta, ostensibly in search of provisions. The officers in command of the ships, perceiving that some excitement existed amongst the people, and that some alarm was felt by the Government, assured all with whom they conversed that they had no designs upon Malta, and that all they required was a supply of provisions and fresh water. They said that their destination was Egypt, and that their orders were to await at Malta the arrival of the commander of the expedition, General Buonaparte. On the 9th June Buonaparte appeared before the island with an immense fleet, under the command of Admiral Brueys. The number of ships-of-war and transports amounted to four hundred and seventy-two. Buonaparte and his staff were on board the *Orient*, which was afterwards blown up at the battle of Aboukir Bay; but on the morning of the 9th June he transferred himself and his personal attendants to a smaller vessel, which, lying close under the island, enabled him to get a view of the fortifications. From this vessel he despatched a messenger on shore with a letter to Caruson, the French consul, and another addressed to the Grand Master, which the consul was required to present in person. Caruson went immediately to the palace, and requested an interview with the Grand Master. Buonaparte's letter to Hompesch

contained a simple request that the whole of the French fleet might be permitted to enter the harbour, and that the troops might be permitted to land and recruit themselves after their voyage from Toulon. Hompesch naturally hesitated to grant such a request, and in order to shirk the blame of a refusal, hastily summoned a Council. A discussion followed, from which it appeared clearly that the majority of the Council were against granting Buonaparte's request. One member, the Bailiff Vargas, ventured to propose that the request should be granted; but the Bailiff De Pennes in reply read an ancient statute of the Order, which declared that "in time of war no more than four armed vessels should ever be admitted at once into the harbour." This brought the discussion to an end. A reply was sent back to Buonaparte, citing this ancient statute, and alleging it as a reason why the French fleet should not be admitted into the harbour of Malta. Buonaparte received the answer with great indignation. "They deny us water, do they?" he said; "but we shall get it in spite of them." The consul, who had delivered the reply of the Council to Buonaparte in person, was detained on board, which was naturally interpreted as a sign of hostile feeling on the part of the French general. That very night, one of those small sailing vessels so common all over the Mediterranean, called a *speronara*, arrived off Malta from Naples. Before she could reach the harbour, she was detained by order of the French admiral, and searched. On board of her were found despatches, which Paul I., Emperor of Russia, had forwarded to Hompesch, through the Court of Naples. Those despatches were of a nature to excite the suspicions of Buonaparte. "Behold!" he exclaimed on reading them, "the boasted neutrality of the Order of St. John." An incident like this was all that was wanted to give the colour of justice to his designs. Early in the morning the news spread rapidly all over the island. The Order had been discovered to be in alliance with Russia, the enemy of France. It had

therefore incurred the displeasure of Buonaparte, who had declared war. The only declaration of war was contained in a letter addressed by Consul Caruson to Hompesch, at the request of Buonaparte. In this letter Caruson said:—"General Buonaparte has resolved to procure by force what should have been granted to him of free will, in accordance with the principles of hospitality which form the basis of your Order. I have seen the stupendous armament which is under the command of Buonaparte, and I foresee that it will be perfectly impossible for the Order to make any effectual resistance."

The French troops were at once landed at St. George's Bay, Buonaparte having first made himself master of the tower which protects the entrance to the bay.

Colonel Porter, in his "History of the Fortress of Malta," says: "The garrison at this time consisted of the following forces:—First, three hundred and thirty-two knights, of whom, however, fifty were too aged to be available for any active service, and two hundred of the remainder were French knights, the majority of whom either openly or secretly favoured the views of the invaders, and could therefore scarcely be considered as of any value to the defence. Secondly, the troops of the island, composed as under:—

The Maltese regiment	500
The Grand Master's guard	200
The battalion of the men-of-war	400
The battalion of the galleys	300
Artillerymen	100
Militia formed into a regiment of Chasseurs	1,200
The crews belonging to the men-of-war and galleys	1,200
The local militia	3,000
Total	6,900

and this number could have been still further swelled by the enrolment of all the able-bodied Maltese, who were bound to serve if required for the defence of their island. Had the same

feeling of loyalty been present on this occasion as that which actuated the garrison during the siege by the Turks, it would not have been in the power of the French general so easily to wrest the fortress from the hands of the fraternity; but, unfortunately, from the very commencement of hostilities, treason and disaffection had made themselves but too painfully apparent."

The night of the 9th June was an anxious one in Malta. Troops were moving in all directions. Artillery and munitions of war were being conveyed to the different posts. Every instant the inhabitants expected the threatened bombardment to commence. When the morning of the 10th dawned, immense numbers of French vessels were seen making for St. George's Bay, where the debarkation of the troops took place. As soon as the troops were landed and formed in order of battle they advanced into the interior of the island. To their great astonishment they met with little or no resistance. In the neighbourhood of two of the villages, *Zebbug* and *Siggewi*, skirmishes took place; but an unarmed handful of peasants could hardly be expected to resist the advance of disciplined troops, under the command of one of the greatest generals of modern times. Notabile surrendered without a shot being fired. Gozo offered no resistance to the detachment which had been ordered to demand the capitulation of that island. "Without the circuit of the fortifications," says Colonel Porter, "scarcely an effort was made to resist the advance of the French; and all the towers and retrenchments, constructed for the express purpose of impeding the approach of an enemy, were tamely yielded without a blow. By noon every point in the island, except the town and the Fort Rohan, now called St. Lucian's Tower, at Marsascirocco, had surrendered to Buonaparte. This last post, indeed, held out in a most gallant and determined manner, and only surrendered at last after the little garrison had been for thirty-six hours without either food or water.

The French lines were drawn close round the Cotonera, and they would at once have penetrated within that work, but that they were impeded from the want of artillery, which had not yet been landed."

The contest now was for the possession of the city of Valletta; and the French having obtained a footing in every other part of the island, and in the neighbouring island of Gozo, could not long be kept out of Valletta, especially when such an idiot as Hompesch was at the head of affairs. The people of Valletta, trembling for their lives and property, now began to wreak their vengeance on those within the walls who were known to be favourable to French interests. Several French families had taken shelter in a store belonging to a merchant named Eynaud, whose family still occupies a prominent position in Malta, and is connected with one of the most respectable commercial houses in that island. M. Eynaud had humanely tried to shelter his French friends from the rage of an infuriated populace; but his humanity cost him his life. He was supposed to sympathise with the invaders, and to have concealed arms within his store; and this report spreading amongst the crowd assembled in the streets, he was attacked and assassinated in the midst of the yells which arose on all sides from excited women and children. This was the commencement of a series of massacres as bloody and as brutal as those which had disgraced the revolutionists of France only a short time before. The Chevalier de Vallin was stabbed and thrown into the sea; the Chevalier de Montazet was killed by his own troops; the Chevalier d'Andelard was put to death by a mob whilst endeavouring to save a comrade from destruction.

All through the night of the 10th June the utmost consternation prevailed in Valletta. Hompesch was worse than useless. Completely bewildered, utterly unable to think or act, paralysed with fear, he remained within the precincts of his palace, and allowed things to take their course. No orders

were given to resist the progress of the enemy. On the morning of the 11th June, when the inhabitants of Valletta looked in the direction of Cotonera, they discovered that the lines were bristling with cannon. A bombardment appeared inevitable, and to the bombardment must have succeeded an escalade and a surrender at discretion, which was sure to be followed by the most frightful carnage. At mid-day Buonaparte sent an envoy to the city under the protection of a flag of truce. He was a general well known in the annals of the French Revolution, chief of brigade, Junot. The Grand Master granted an interview, heard the message of the French general, and, without hesitation, yielded to his demand. This was, that an armistice for twenty-four hours should be declared, to commence at six o'clock on the evening of the 11th; and that during that time Hompesch should send deputies on board the *Orient* to arrange with General Buonaparte the terms of a surrender. From this moment, of course, everything was lost to the Order. The deputation was at once named. It consisted of the following gentlemen, who represented the Maltese people:—The Baron M. Testaferrata, Dr. B. Schembri, Dr. G. N. Muscat, and Dr. F. Bonanni; besides the Commander Ransijat and the Bailiff Frisari, who represented the Order. These deputies proceeded on board the *Orient* early on the morning of the 12th June, when the following capitulation was signed, sealed, and delivered. I give the Articles as they are quoted by Colonel Porter:—

"Art. 1. The knights of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem shall deliver up to the French army the city and forts of Malta; they shall renounce in favour of the French Republic all rights of sovereignty and property which they possess, not only in that island, but also in Comino and Gozo.

"Art. 2. The French Republic shall employ its influence at the Congress of Rastadt to secure for the Grand Master a principality equivalent to the one he surrenders; and the said

Republic in the meanwhile engages to pay him an annual pension of three hundred thousand francs. He shall also receive, in addition, the value of two years' pension as an indemnity for his personal property. He shall continue to receive the usual military honours during the remainder of his stay in Malta.

"ART. 3. The French knights of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem actually residing in Malta, if acknowledged as such by the Commander-in-Chief, shall be permitted to return to their own country, and their residence in Malta shall be considered in the same light as though they had lived in France.

"ART. 4. The French Republic shall employ its credit with the different powers, that the knights of each nation may be allowed to exercise their right over the property of the Order of Malta situated in their dominions.

"ART. 6. The knights shall not be deprived of their private property either in Malta or Gozo.

"ART. 7. The inhabitants of the islands of Malta and Gozo shall be allowed, as of old, the free exercise of the Catholic, Apostolic, and Holy Roman religion; their privileges and property shall remain inviolate, and they shall not be subject to any extraordinary taxes.

"ART. 8. All civil acts passed during the government of the Order shall still remain valid.

"Signed on board the *Orient*, off Malta, on the 24th Prairial, the sixth year of the French Republic (12th June, 1798)—

"The Commander BOISREDONT DE RANSIJAT,
"Baron MARIO TESTAFERRATA,
"Dr. G. NICHOLAS MUSCAT,
"Dr. BENEDICT SCHEMBRI,
"Councillor V. F. BONNANI,
"The Bailiff of Turin, FRISARI,

without prejudice to the rights of dominion which belong to my sovereign, the King of the Two Sicilies—

"Chevalier PHILIP DE AMAT."*

"Such," continues Colonel Porter, "were the terms of the capitulation, by virtue of which the fortress was transferred from the power of the Order of St. John to that of the French Republic. Little more than two centuries had elapsed since the heroic La Vallette had maintained his rights, and those of his fraternity, over this island stronghold against the utmost efforts of the Ottoman empire. Then the place was but insignificant in its strength, and but for the indomitable spirit which pervaded the garrison it must have speedily fallen an easy prey to the attacks of Mustafà. Now, however, fresh bulwarks had arisen on every side. Not a point of vantage-ground had been left to an enemy, and yet, secure as he might have felt in the impregnability of the most noble fortress in Europe, the weak, vacillating Hompesch suffered himself to be overawed by the turbulence of the disaffected and his dread of the French, and tamely surrendered his power and his home without a struggle."

The news of the capitulation produced much consternation amongst the people; but all sensible and right-minded persons acknowledged that an Order which had so basely yielded to an enemy when resistance was not only possible, but advisable, deserved to fall; and although not Republicans, they welcomed the French as their liberators from a Government which, whilst it was frequently tyrannical, had lost the *prestige* which makes even a tyrannical Government supportable. On the night of the 17th June, Hompesch left Malta for Trieste on board of an Austrian ship-of-war, which was accompanied by the French frigate *Artemisia*. He died at Trieste on the 12th May, 1805.

* The Chevalier de Amat was the Spanish ambassador accredited to the Order of St. John.

It may be well here to note the fact that Hompesch resigned the office of Grand Master in 1799, the year after he left Malta, when the Emperor Paul I. of Russia was appointed to succeed him. On the death of the Emperor Paul in 1801, the Bailiff Ruspoli, then resident in London, was appointed to fill the office, but declined to do so. The Bailiff Giovanni Tommasi consented to take his place, and fixed his residence at Catania, where he died in 1805, the same year as Hompesch died. No more Grand Masters were elected. The office having become unnecessary was abolished, although the Order of St. John is not extinct.

We now enter upon a new era in the history of Malta. The occupation of Malta by the French, and the siege of Valletta, which took place during their brief tenure of the island, will form the subject of the next two chapters; after which we shall consider the condition of the island and its inhabitants during the time that it has enjoyed the favour and the protection of the British Crown.

CHAPTER XI.

THE FRENCH OCCUPATION OF MALTA, AND THE SIEGE OF VALLETTA.—FIRST YEAR. 1798—1799.

I HAVE recorded briefly but accurately all that is known of the ancient history of Malta. I have traced its history during the two hundred and sixty-eight years that it was governed by the Knights of St. John. I now enter on the detail of the sufferings endured by the people of Malta during the two years that the island was held by the French Republic; sufferings from which they were delivered by the British Government, under which Malta has risen to wealth and importance.

On the 19th June, two days after the departure of Hompesch, General Buonaparte quitted Malta at the head of the expedition which was destined for Egypt, leaving behind him four thousand men, under General Vaubois, to regenerate the island, as France had shortly before been regenerated during the horrors of the Revolution. The knights who were attached to the French interest had little reason to applaud the wisdom of their political speculations. Exposed to the rage of the Maltese people, and unprotected by those for whom they had risked everything, some fled from the island, some actually perished from want, and all suffered the loss of the moral power which political integrity invariably gives to its possessors.

The very day after the terms of the capitulation were signed Buonaparte began to organise the new Government of the island by publishing a series of regulations, which he called *Ordres du jour*.

By the order of the 13th June it was declared that Malta and

Gozo were henceforth to be "governed by a commission composed of nine members, to be appointed by the General Commanding-in-Chief, each member to preside in turn." In other words, the islands were placed under martial law.

Three days after, every one was commanded, under a penalty, to wear the tricoloured cockade; but no one was allowed to wear the dress of a French citizen unless permission had first been obtained from the Commander-in-Chief; and permission was to be granted only to those persons who had openly shown their attachment to the French Republic. Everything which bore the stamp of nobility, or recalled to mind the military exploits performed by the knights, was broken and destroyed. The arms of the Order of St. John, together with those of the principal Grand Masters, which had been at various times placed on the public buildings, were effaced. Every record of patrician ancestry was obliterated. Alaric at the head of his Goths, and Attila at the head of his Huns, were not so brutally destructive as Buonaparte at the head of the Republican troops of France. Entering the Church of St. John, Buonaparte laid his sacrilegious hands on nearly every article of value to be found within its walls, and ordered the treasures to be conveyed on board the *Orient*.* Arbitrary as the knights had been, their rule was mild indeed compared with that of the Republican chief, who headed every proclamation with the words: "Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity."

After pillaging St. John's Church, Buonaparte turned his attention to the smaller churches, and then helped himself to the contents of the public treasury.

The next step was to disarm all the inhabitants, except those on whose "patriotism" the Commander-in-Chief could rely.

In order to cultivate the growth of patriotic feeling Buonaparte ordered, under a heavy fine, that the sons of the richest

* These treasures never reached France. They were lost in the *Orient*.

Maltese families should be sent to France to be educated, and that the poorer classes should be drafted into the military and naval services of the Republic. Proclamations were next issued regulating the public instruction to be given at Malta, and others remodelling the existing ecclesiastical establishment.

Buonaparte's last ordinance, published on the day before his departure from Malta, limited the jurisdiction of the Bishop to cases of discipline amongst ecclesiastics. All proceedings relative to marriage and divorce, which had hitherto been conducted in the Bishop's court, were transferred to the civil tribunals; and, finally, all appeals to the Pope were positively forbidden, and all interference on the part of the Court of Rome in the affairs of the island rendered absolutely impossible.

These and many other less important arrangements having been made during the course of six days, Buonaparte, as has already been said, left Malta on the 19th June. The military command of the island was entrusted to General Vaubois, and the administration of civil affairs to General Regnaud de St. Jean d'Angely.

On the 14th July, the anniversary of the capture of the Bastile by the revolutionary mobs of Paris, a "national" festival was celebrated at Malta. In the course of one single month the whole population was supposed to have become violently republican; a population that for a thousand years had been governed on monarchical principles, and for the two hundred and sixty-eight years immediately preceding had been ruled by the most aristocratic and absolute power in Europe. The following is the programme of the festival:—"The national guard, with the troops of the line, and the *chasseurs*, will assemble on the National Square" (now St. George's Square, opposite the Governor's palace) "at 3 P.M. At 4 P.M. rewards will be distributed." (Whether these were rewards for the valour displayed by the French troops in the capture of the island does not appear.) "After the distribution of the rewards the

municipal body will wait on the Government Commissioners, and both will proceed to visit the general of division with his staff. Then a procession will be formed from the palace to the harbour in the following order:—1. A detachment of French grenadiers, preceded by drums. 2. A detachment of Maltese *chasseurs*, preceded by those on whom the military rewards had been bestowed. 3. The heads of Government departments, and all those Maltese who have obtained permission to wear the dress of French citizens. 4. Six youths to whom commissions in the French navy had been presented. 5. A detachment of French troops, preceded by a military band. 6. The members of the Government Commission, with the Bishop of Malta. 7. Four brides with their bridegrooms, who had been married on the previous day by the Bishop. 8. The general of division, the generals of brigade, and the senior naval officer. 9. A detachment of French grenadiers. The vessels in the harbour shall be dressed with flags. The general of division, with his staff, shall pay a visit of ceremony to the senior naval officer on board of his flag-ship. A salute shall then be fired from the ships and the batteries, in the midst of which the tricoloured standard of the French Republic shall be hoisted; after which the six young naval officers above alluded to shall hoist the tricolour on the TREE OF LIBERTY. The procession shall return to the National Square in the same order as before, passing through the *Street of the Rights of Man*" (now Strada Reale). "The general of division, with the other generals, shall take their places on the altar of their country" (*autel de la patrie*). "War hymns shall then be sung. The standard shall again be hoisted on the Tree of Liberty, and saluted by a volley of artillery; after which the general of division shall be re-conducted to the palace in state. The city shall be illuminated, and a band shall play before the palace."

This programme was fully carried out. The spectacle was an imposing one, savouring rather of monarchical pomp than of

republican simplicity. Political discourses were delivered by Vaubois, Regnaud d'Angely, Ransijat, and others, but the people would not be seduced by their eloquence. A military pageant was a poor compensation for their lost liberty, and the frothy eloquence of military adventurers a miserable substitute for the substantial glories of the Order of St. John.

On the 10th August the festival of liberty was again celebrated at Vittoriosa, for the benefit of the inhabitants living on the side of the harbour opposite to Valletta; and a day or two after notice was given that some of the orders of Buonaparte were to be put in force—that the property of some of the suppressed convents would be sold, and that taxes would be levied to supply the "national" exchequer. Then the people began to feel the weight of the burden that had been laid on them, and to murmur against their oppressors. In the midst of the general dissatisfaction news arrived in Malta of the victory gained by Lord Nelson at Aboukir Bay; and it was no small mortification to General Vaubois to find that the people generally rejoiced at the disaster to the French fleet, and looked forward to their deliverance from the French yoke by the naval power of England. It might have been supposed that under these circumstances Vaubois would have tried to soothe a discontented people by the introduction of mild measures, and by adopting plans which would have won the people over to acquiesce in the French seizure of the island; but the plan which he did adopt was one worthy of the genius of liberty, which was not to be restrained even by the reverence due to truth. He actually issued a proclamation, in which he stated "that nothing could be more false than the news of the defeat of the French fleet in Aboukir Bay." In the course of time, however, the people learned that the news was indeed true, and were much amazed at the French general's impudence.

Matters became worse and worse every day. Amongst other acts of the Government, copyholds which had formerly been

held for three generations were declared extinct at the expiration of a hundred years, and those which had already run this period were declared to be terminated. This act, however, the Government could not enforce, as everything made it apparent that the attempt to enforce it would drive the people at once into rebellion. But oppression did not slacken its pace. All pensions were suspended, charitable funds were withheld, and even the four hundred loaves of bread which the knights had daily distributed to the poor were refused by the paternal Government of republican France. In addition to all this, quarantines had been established in Sicily on all arrivals from Malta, because of the free communication that Malta permitted with the Levant. This, of course, led to a scarcity of provisions, difficulties in carrying on commercial transactions with the Continent, and general depression of trade. At last things reached their climax. The people, oppressed, insulted, trampled upon, only wanted a pretext for breaking out into open rebellion, and an incident occurred which furnished this pretext.

On the morning of the 2nd September three Maltese *employés* of the French Government were sent out to Notabile with orders to seize upon and bring into Valletta some tapestry and other decorations belonging to the church called "del Carmine," for the purpose of having them sold by public auction. On their arrival at Notabile, however, their object becoming known, a large crowd assembled, and expressed a determination not to permit the desecration of the church; and the three messengers, considering that discretion was the better part of valour, retired without obeying the orders they had received. The commandant of the garrison at Notabile was the Citizen Masson, a man stern by nature, and determined to assert the authority of the Republican Government. On being informed of what had occurred, he despatched a letter to General Vaubois, asking for a reinforcement, as he had only sixty men under his command. Then, sword in hand, and accompanied by a lieu-

tenant and a private soldier, he walked through the town, abusing the inhabitants, and threatening vengeance upon them for having dared to resist the authority of the Government. The crowd at once reassembled. Stones were thrown at him and his companions. All three ran and took refuge in the house of a notary named Bezzina. The mob forced open the door. Masson was seized and thrown out of a window. The fall killed him. The soldier was stabbed; and the lieutenant escaped almost miraculously, and found his way into Valletta, where, as soon as he told his story, the gates were closed. The small garrison of sixty men, on learning the fate of their commander, shut themselves up within the barracks. Meanwhile, people collected from the villages in the neighbourhood of Notabile, and attacked the barracks. The soldiers poured volleys of musketry upon them, but could not drive them back. The barracks were taken by assault, and the soldiers laid down their arms. Emmanuel Vitale, a Maltese gentleman, who had led the insurgent mob, was about to dictate the conditions of surrender, when some of the French soldiers imprudently fired off their muskets, and killed four of Vitale's men. Then the rage of the Maltese knew no bounds. "Base traitors!" they exclaimed, "take the reward of your treachery!" and every soldier was mercilessly put to death. The bodies of the soldiers, after this deed of blood, were brought out of the city, and burned on the top of the hill, after which the red and white flag, the ancient standard of Malta, was hoisted on the ramparts instead of the tricolour of France.

The news of what had occurred at Notabile spread like the flames in an American prairie all over the islands; and in the course of a few hours Malta and Gozo were in open rebellion against the French Government. General Vaubois, early on the morning of the 3rd September, sent two hundred men to Notabile; but before they had proceeded far on their march they were assailed on all sides by the insurgents, many of them

were killed, and the rest were compelled to retreat to Valletta, where their companions opened the gates to re-admit them, and then closed them against the rebel population.

Five days before the revolt of the Maltese the news of the battle of Aboukir Bay had been brought to General Vaubois by the *Guillaume Tell*, a French man-of-war, and two frigates. The crews of these vessels were added to the troops under the command of the French general, who now found himself at the head of six thousand well-disciplined men.

Vaubois now began to adopt measures to endure a blockade. All communication between the city of Valletta and the adjacent country was forbidden. Many of the Maltese, of course, were shut up within the walls of the besieged city. Some of these still retained their allegiance to the French Government, but most of them sympathised with the insurgents, and took every opportunity of forwarding their plans.

On examining into the condition of the stores in Valletta, it was found that there were thirty-six thousand quarters of wheat in the city; and this, according to Ransijat, sufficed to maintain the population in the city for about twenty months. Vaubois, notwithstanding this, felt that it was his duty to recall the people to their allegiance, if possible; and a deputation, consisting of a Capuchin friar, two parish priests, and a merchant, was sent to Vitale, the leader of the insurgents, with an offer of a general amnesty, and a promise to treat all sacred edifices in future with due respect. But the Maltese were not to be deceived by promises, and unhesitatingly rejected every offer made by a Government which they had every reason heartily to detest.

Vitale was unanimously elected general of the insurgents; but he was required to take counsel in every matter of importance with a priest of the highest character and of the greatest ability, Canon Francesco Saverio Caruana, afterwards Bishop of Malta. Three representatives of the people were

elected: the Count Manduca, the Count Teuma, and the Marquis de Piro. Military chiefs were also elected and appointed over each village, with the title of Chief of Battalion, a title borrowed, evidently, from the military organisation of the French. These preparations having been made, the next step was to transport guns from the small watch-towers on the coast, and to erect batteries round the town. One was erected opposite to the gate still called *Porte des Bombes*, another on the heights of Corradino, and another in the neighbourhood of Fort Manoel.

On the 18th of September a Portuguese squadron appeared off the island, and the admiral sent a message on shore, requiring Vaubois to surrender the island to him, and threatening him with a bombardment in case of refusal. The answer of Vaubois was an answer of defiance. On the 24th Lord Nelson's fleet hove in sight. It consisted of fourteen sail of the line, in a very shattered condition after the recent battle at Aboukir Bay. A second message was conveyed to the French general, requiring him to surrender to the combined fleets, and offering to convey him and his troops safely to France; but his answer was that he would hold the fortress so long as it was possible for him to do so. The port of Valletta was consequently blockaded by the united fleets; but the British fleet was compelled, after a few days, to proceed to Naples to refit, leaving the Portuguese fleet to carry on the blockade alone.

Amongst the Maltese at this critical time the man who possessed the greatest political foresight appears to have been Canon Caruana. On the very first occasion on which he presided at the council of war, he reminded his colleagues that the ancient standard of Malta, under which they had rallied, recalled to mind a Government long antecedent to that of the Knights of St. John—a Government which had ceased to exist for many centuries. The red and white flag, he said, was a mere historical reminiscence—a mere symbol of past ages. It

was necessary now to rally under a flag which was able to afford the inhabitants of Malta protection from the insults of the French nation. The help of one of the great powers of Europe was needed; and he counselled his countrymen to place themselves under the protection of some foreign sovereign, suggesting that that sovereign should be Ferdinand IV., King of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies. Surely, the reader will say, no man possessing any knowledge of the affairs of Europe could have spoken of the Two Sicilies as one of the great powers of Europe, and of Ferdinand IV. as a monarch capable of affording the necessary protection to the Maltese people. The truth is, that Canon Caruana saw, what few of his countrymen appear to have seen, that the only power able to hold Malta against all enemies, and to afford protection whilst granting freedom to her people, was England; and, in suggesting an offer of allegiance to Ferdinand of Naples, he was but hinting his desires respecting England, under whose protection Ferdinand then lived. His suggestion was so far adopted that a despatch was secretly forwarded to the King of Naples, informing him of the desire of Canon Caruana and his colleagues to place the island under his protection, in return for which Ferdinand sent over several vessels containing ammunition and money, which the Maltese contrived to land safely.

Furnished with ammunition and full of hope, the Maltese redoubled their exertions, and determined that the French should either leave Valletta or perish within its walls. The position in which they were placed was a most trying one. If the enemy was to be dislodged it must be by bombardment, and every shot that was fired into the city, whilst it did some mischief to the French garrison, did still greater mischief to the public and private buildings, the property not of the besieged, but of the besiegers.

On the 6th October, Vaubois, contrary to his own judgment,

but at the earnest request of the soldiers under his command, permitted a *sortie*. "The intention," says Ransijat, "was to get possession of the village of Zabbar, to sack it, and either remove or destroy all the provisions it might contain; but the great resistance which was offered by the Maltese, favoured by the walls, which form so many natural trenches, made the success of the project impossible. We were only able," he says, "to penetrate into one portion of the village, which we were obliged to abandon, having lost in that attack, and in another which was made at the same time on Fort Tigné, eight men killed and thirty-two wounded."

On the 18th October, Lord Nelson returned to Malta, with three ships of the line and two frigates; and on the same day a Neapolitan corvette appeared, furnished with munitions of war and provisions. A few days after, two Neapolitan frigates arrived. The captain of one of them was the bearer of a letter from the King of Naples to his "faithful Maltese subjects," encouraging them in their resistance to the power of France, and promising them every assistance.

Lord Nelson continued to cruise off Malta for a few days, after which he was compelled to return to Naples; but, on leaving, he placed Captain Alexander John Ball, commanding the *Alexander*, in charge of the British squadron, with orders to continue the blockade in concert with the Portuguese.

At the close of November, Ferdinand IV. concluded a treaty of alliance with Russia, by which he was to be immediately furnished with nine Russian battalions of infantry and a train of artillery. At the same time he entered into an agreement with England, by which England bound herself to maintain in the Mediterranean a naval force superior to that of France. This step gave the British Government a pretext for interfering directly in matters connected with Malta, of which it was not slow, when an opportunity presented itself, to take advantage. The siege of Valletta had now been carried on for about six weeks.

Many of the Maltese within the city contrived to open a communication with the insurgents outside, and a conspiracy was formed which soon attained very large proportions, and promised to put an end to the siege by suddenly cutting off the whole of the French garrison. The conspirators took some time to mature their plans. Meanwhile, British, Portuguese, and Neapolitan sailors were landed from their respective ships to assist the Maltese in carrying on the siege. The head-quarters of the besiegers were established at San Giuseppe, about two miles from Valletta, in the direction of Notabile. Batteries were erected at all points, and preparations were made for a general bombardment.

As a preliminary step, the British naval commander-in-chief, Captain Ball, summoned the French garrison of Gozo to surrender. At the beginning of the insurrection some of the soldiers had taken refuge in the castle at Gozo, and others in the small fort of Chambray, near the harbour of that island. Both places were as strongly fortified as circumstances permitted. The Gozitans attacked both the strongholds, but without success. The troops stationed at Chambray contrived to steal out of the fort under cover of the night, and found their way to Malta on board of a gun-boat which happened to be lying in the harbour. Eluding all the sentinels of the insurgents, they found their way into Valletta, where they joined their companions in arms. The other body of troops kept possession of the castle at Gozo, and resisted every assault made upon them by the islanders; but when threatened with an attack by British forces they consulted their safety by surrendering, and marching out of the castle with all the honours of war. Captain Ball took possession of the place on the 29th October. The flag of the Two Sicilies was hoisted on the walls of the castle, and the Canon Don Salvatore Cassar was appointed Governor of Gozo until circumstances should determine the fate of the island.

About a month later, on the 21st November, the French garrison of Valletta made another *sortie*, with the intention of destroying the batteries which had been erected on the heights of Corradino, and which were beginning to harass the city. Ransijat informs us that a heavy fire of musketry was directed against the rebels, besides long-continued discharges of shot and shell, and they behaved on this, as on every other occasion, most courageously. The French troops, notwithstanding their superior discipline and their well-directed fire, were unable to succeed in their enterprise, and were obliged to return to the city. Their loss only amounted, according to Ransijat, to four men wounded; but their national vanity was not a little hurt at being driven back by an enemy whom hitherto they had treated with contempt. Other accounts state the loss of the French on this occasion to have been considerable. There can be little doubt that Ransijat has, all through his account of the siege, concealed or falsified facts which told in any way against his own countrymen. One of his statements, for instance, is known positively to have been untrue: that during the whole course of the siege, up to the 20th of December, only two persons had been killed by the enemy's fire—a soldier and an old woman.

All this time the conspirators within the walls of Valletta had been carefully forming their plans for a general surprise of the garrison, and the insurgents without the walls were ready to co-operate with them. It was arranged that all the military posts in Valletta were to be simultaneously attacked. It had been observed that the sentinels generally performed their duty very negligently, and it was hoped that they could be easily surprised and cut down before they could give the alarm. A Corsican, who had been a colonel in the Russian service, was at the head of the plot, and he undertook to surprise the Grand Master's palace, which General Vaubois had made his head-quarters. Another officer was to seize on

the Marine Gate. A farrier was selected to lead the attacking party against the Porta Reale, the principal gate of the city; and a barber was entrusted with the duty of getting possession of the Marsamuscetto Gate. Other detachments were to seize St. Elmo and the Auberge de Castile. The time fixed for the carrying out of these plans was the night of the 11th January, 1799. A general attack was to be made at a given signal from the outside, and the garrison, distracted by having to defend so many different points at once, was to be easily overpowered. An accident caused the plot to be discovered.

For months the French within the walls of Valletta had received no intelligence of the state of affairs on the Continent, but on the morning of the 11th January a Genoese merchant vessel arrived in the harbour, having escaped the blockading ships. She was laden with wine and salt provisions for the French troops, and she brought letters containing the intelligence of the success of the Republican arms in Naples and in Piedmont. Elated at the news, General Vaubois ordered a salute to be fired, and resolved to celebrate the event by an extraordinary performance in the theatre. All the officers of the garrison flocked to the theatre. The officer commanding Fort Manoel had obtained permission to be present with one of his subalterns at the performance; and, at the close of it, the two proceeded to the Marsamuscetto Gate on their way back to the fort. When they entered their boat and were about putting off, their attention was attracted by a light and by the sound of whispered conversation on the neighbouring rocks. On their return to Fort Manoel an officer was at once despatched with eight men to search the rocks, and a large number of Maltese were discovered crouching amidst the rocks beneath the walls, and awaiting the opening of the gate and the signal which was to seal the fate of the unhappy garrison. On being discovered, some of the conspirators threw themselves into the sea, and others made their escape over the rocks,

favoured by the darkness of the night, but thirty-four of them fell into the hands of the French troops. The alarm was at once given, and the plans of the conspirators of course failed. The next day an investigation was held, and it was discovered that the Corsican, Guglielmo Lorenzi, was at the head of the plot. This Guglielmo had lived in Malta from the days of his boyhood, and was regarded as a native of the island, though in reality a Corsican. In 1787 he had entered the Russian navy, and the Empress Catherine had confided to him the command of a division of the fleet which was carrying on operations against the Turks. He retired from the Russian service with the rank of colonel. On his trial before a French court-martial for treason, he was convicted, and, refusing to give the names of his accomplices, was shot. Ransijat gives the following account of the occurrence in his journal of the siege:—

"On the 8th Pluviose (27th January), although the commandant, Guglielmo, refused to discover any of his accomplices, he nevertheless acknowledged, after his condemnation, that he was at the head of the conspiracy, which he said he had encouraged because he thought it likely to be successful, having observed that the sentinels and the *corps de garde* did their duty very negligently. He and his friends therefore trusted to be able to bring the project to a successful termination with their daggers and their muskets. They resolved to kill the sentinels by stabbing them, then to fall on the soldiers in the guard-houses, to take possession of their muskets, and thus to overawe the city, whilst the insurgents from the country, on a given signal, were to scale the outer walls in order to increase the embarrassment and confusion of the garrison. The principal conspirators, amounting to between fifty and seventy persons, were, on the 11th January, at seven in the morning, to attack all the principal military posts. Guglielmo was to take possession of the palace, the head-quarters of the General and his staff; Peralta, an officer of *chasseurs* under the late Government, was

to seize the Marine Gate; D'Amato, a farrier of the Maltese regiment under the old *régime*, was to get possession of the National (now the Royal) Gate; Pulis, a perfumer employed by the Board of Health, was to guard the Marsamuscetto Gate; others were to seize Fort St. Elmo and the Auberge de Castile, which latter place, being in the neighbourhood of one of the strong cavaliers, could easily be taken. From the cavaliers the signals were to be made to the rebels in the country. One Satariano, a manufacturer of swords, who appears to have had his life saved on condition of his revealing the principal facts connected with the plot, being one of the most experienced persons amongst the conspirators, was appointed to distribute swords and cartridges."

Ransijat here expresses his opinion on the results of the conspiracy in the event of its not being discovered; he admits that much blood would have been shed, but he denies the possibility of the rebels being, under any circumstances, successful. He then continues:—"That which cannot fail to astonish is that, amongst so many conspirators, no one should have betrayed the secret, whilst the intelligence obtained from a few Greeks and from one Maltese concerning the plot was only given after the hour at which it was to be put into execution, and when precautions had been taken to prevent its success; whilst the prisoners taken at Marsamuscetto all declared that on the evening of the 11th they had been informed that nothing more remained to be done, and that they might retire as soon as possible. Up to the present time only two priests have been discovered to be connected with this plot, one of whom is named Don Michele Xerri;* he is the intimate friend of the Canon Caruana, chief of the rebels

* Don Michele Xerri was Professor of Philosophy in the University. He was promised his life on the condition that he would reveal all that he knew of the conspiracy; but he shrank from revealing the names of his accomplices. He was accordingly shot, with forty-five other persons, on the square opposite General Vaubois' palace, now called St. George's Square.

in the country. He would not reveal the names of any of his accomplices, and is regarded as one of the most highly educated of the Maltese. This ecclesiastic appears to have played a very conspicuous part; but it is worthy of remark that up to the present time none of the ex-nobles appear to have been connected with this horrid plot. The precautions which are being adopted, and the severe punishment with which the guilty are being visited, will prevent any future attempt at an outbreak. Thirty-eight persons have, so far, been shot." This extract is interesting as having been written by an eye-witness of the events of the siege. The date of this passage, taken from Ransijat's journal, is the 27th January, 1799.

The indignation felt and manifested by General Vaubois at the existence of the conspiracy was very great. Tyrannical as the French general had been before, he became tenfold more so. Orders were at once given that no native should approach the subterranean passages which connect Valletta with the works at Floriana; that not more than three individuals should be permitted to assemble together in the public streets; that no one should go about at night without a lantern, and then only until ten o'clock; that every one having arms in his possession should, under pain of death, surrender them within twenty-four hours; and that every native having a knife should be compelled to break off the point of it, so that a stab could not be inflicted with it. Whoever approached the fortifications, under any pretext whatsoever, without permission from the military authorities, was shot. These orders were rigorously carried out, and it may easily be imagined that, as week after week passed away, the natives of Malta became less and less attached to the paternal Government of republican France.

The people in the country, although disappointed at the failure of the plot, were not disheartened by it. They fortified their trenches all the more strongly, and they poured their shells incessantly into the city, and into the midst of the fleet

lying at anchor in the harbour. One piece of news which reached them at this time had the effect of discouraging them; but only for a moment. They learned that Naples had fallen into the hands of the French, that Murat had been made King of Naples, and that Ferdinand, under the protection of Lord Nelson, had taken refuge in Palermo. Provisions, too, were becoming every day more and more scarce; and fearing a famine throughout the island, Canon Caruana determined to send an embassy to confer with King Ferdinand and Lord Nelson at Palermo. The prices paid for provisions in Malta during the month of February, 1799, may serve to give the reader some idea of the scarcity which prevailed. Rabbits were sold for six shillings each, and pigeons for five shillings; fowls were £1 4*s.* 2*d.* each, and cheese half-a-crown per pound. In the month of August prices were much higher. Cheese rose to seven shillings and fourpence per pound, and fowls to £2 8*s.* each; fresh pork was six shillings per pound, and pigeons ten shillings each; whilst sugar could not be had for less than seventeen shillings and sixpence per pound. A few months later, prices rose still higher. Sugar was sold at £2 per pound, and coffee at £2 8*s.* 4*d.*, whilst many articles of food could not be procured at any price. Rats, mice, and other vermin were eagerly consumed by the hungry people, and all the horrors of actual starvation began to be experienced by the brave islanders, contending on their own soil with a powerful enemy for life and liberty.

The embassy despatched to Palermo consisted of three persons—the Abbé Savoye, the Baron Fournier, and the Assessor Agius, all natives of Malta, and zealous in behalf of the rights of the people. They left for Palermo early in February, 1799, on board the English frigate *Terpsichore;* and, on their arrival, obtained an interview with Lord Nelson and Sir William Hamilton, British Ambassador at the Court of Naples. They entreated that the King of Naples and the

British authorities would furnish them with men and ammunition, and help them to drive the French out of Malta. They represented that five months of war had exhausted their supply of ammunition, and that the island was, besides, threatened with famine. They therefore requested that no time should be lost in sending over ships from Sicily laden with provisions; for unless help was sent over without delay, the heroic defenders of the island would either die of hunger, or be compelled to surrender at discretion to the merciless Government of France.

Matters were, as I have said, growing desperate in Malta, but the envoys from Malta took care to make them appear even worse than they were, in the hope that Ferdinand, feeling his own inability to help them, would permit them to seek help from Great Britain. Their *ruse* had the desired effect. Ferdinand acknowledged that in the present unsettled state of his own kingdom he could do but little to help the Maltese, who had but lately declared themselves his subjects. He accordingly permitted them to ask the help of the British Government, and even, if they considered it advisable, to hoist the British flag on their ramparts.

This had been all along the design of the Canon Caruana, to pave the way for the cession of the island to Great Britain. A great step had now been taken. The next step was even more important. On the return of the envoys to Malta, Captain Ball, who had been left in charge of the British fleet blockading the harbour of Malta, was invited to fix his residence on shore and to assist the insurgents with his advice. The invitation was accepted. Captain Ball delegated the charge of the blockade to the next senior officer in the fleet, and took up his abode at the head-quarters of the native forces, where his influence soon began to be felt.

It was clearly the interest of the Maltese to confide their destinies to the power of England. There could be no doubt

that if they hesitated to do this they would either be conquered by the French or fall into the hands of the Russians. Indeed, it was rumoured, and pretty generally believed, that in the spring of 1800 a strong body of Russian troops would be sent to Italy, and that an arrangement had been entered into between the Courts of Naples and St. Petersburg, by virtue of which, if the French could be driven out of Malta, the island was to be delivered over to the Czar, who was to re-establish the Order of St. John, of which, as I have said, he had been appointed Grand Master.

This being the state of affairs, it was but reasonable that the Maltese should seek to place themselves under a Government from which they had every reason to expect fair treatment, religious and political liberty, and protection against all enemies. Dr. Vassallo charges the Canon Caruana with being influenced by the most sordid of motives in desiring the cession of Malta to Great Britain, and taking all possible means to carry his plans into execution. He had set his heart on being Bishop of Malta, says Dr. Vassallo, and he knew that he could not expect to obtain the office through the influence either of the Neapolitan or the Russian Government. Canon Caruana certainly did become Bishop of Malta, and it was doubtless the influence of the British Government with the Papal Court which procured him the bishopric as the reward of his political services; but to say that he was actuated by a desire for promotion when he proposed the cession of Malta to the British Crown is to make an assertion for which there does not appear to be the smallest foundation. The truth is that Canon Caruana possessed what few of his countrymen even now possess—a large amount of political sagacity. He could look beyond the present moment. He saw in Great Britain the only country in union with which his beloved island could be prosperous, and although he was a Roman ecclesiastic, and therefore might be expected to favour absolutism, he had a

heart beneath his cassock which beat with an earnest desire for that liberty which every wise man knows can exist only under a constitutional form of government. He therefore advised his countrymen to seek the protection of the greatest maritime power and the most tolerant Government in the world. But it is hard for a Maltese to understand and to appreciate the integrity and the foresight of such a man as Canon Caruana. In talents, in integrity, in foresight, in knowledge of the world, in zeal for constitutional liberty, Caruana was superior to every one of his contemporaries, and far in advance of his age. Hence his countrymen have never understood or done justice to his character, and have generally ascribed to mere worldly ambition the desire which he exhibited to see the banner of England unfurled on the bastions of the renowned island which gave him birth.

Whatever may have been his motives, the fact remains that it was at his instigation that Captain Ball was invited to preside at the council of war in the camp at San Giuseppe; and from the day on which that distinguished officer took his seat at the head of the men who were battling for their rights, the power of the French garrison within Valletta began to decline, and prosperity began to dawn on Malta and her motley population.

CHAPTER XII.

THE FRENCH OCCUPATION OF MALTA, AND THE SIEGE OF VALLETTA.—SECOND YEAR. 1799—1800.

THE first time that Captain Ball presided at the council of war, he proposed to add to the original members of it a representative from every *casal* or village in the island, who should be elected by a majority of the votes of all persons being heads of families. He also suggested that the new assembly should be called a Congress, and that it should meet at the Palace of Sant' Antonio, where he had taken up his residence. His suggestion having been favourably received, the 11th February, 1799, was named as the day for the first meeting of the Congress. On that day the members—having been duly elected—met, and it was resolved that the two leaders, Caruana and Vitale, as well as the heads of battalions, should be confirmed as ordinary members; that to the new representatives of the people should be added a representative of the clergy, and that this representative should be *ex officio* the Vicar-General of the diocese. It was also agreed that a judge should be invited to become a member of the Congress; that he should be nominated by the votes of the ordinary members and of the representative members, and that Dr. L. Agius should be the first person elected to fill the office. The Abbé Savoye, who had been one of the deputies to Sicily, and Signor B. Agius, were appointed secretaries; but the confidential adviser and the trusted friend of Captain Ball was Canon Caruana.

The Congress undertook at once to make laws and regula-

tions for the government of the island, whilst at the same time the siege of Valletta was vigorously carried on. The communication with Marsascirocco in the south-east of the island, and with St. Paul's Bay in the north-west, was open, and in both these places custom-houses were established, and moderate port dues exacted from all vessels coming to an anchor there. Courts of justice were established at Notabile and in the *casals*. Loans were requested for the maintenance of the besieging troops, and interest at five per cent. guaranteed by the Congress. Arrangements were made for the proper management of the property which had belonged to the Order of St. John, and which was now considered to be the property of the popular Government.*

* The following is a list of the twenty-two *casals* or villages of Malta. The name opposite each *casal* is that of its representative at the popular Congress of 1799.

1. Notabile, Rabato, and Casal Dingli . . . Sig. E. Vitale.
2. Zebbug . . . . . Notary P. Buttigieg.
3. Siggeui . . . . . Don Salvatore Curso, Parish Priest.
4. Micabiba . . . . . Don Bartolomeo Garaffa, ditto.
5. Crendi . . . . . Sig. Gregorio Mifsud.
6. Zurrico . . . . . Don Fortunato Dalli..
7. Safi . . . . . Sig. G. Abdilla.
8. Chircop . . . . . Sig. Enrico Xerri.
9. Gudia . . . . . Sig. Filippo Castagna.
10. Asciach . . . . . Don Pietro Mallia.
11. Zeitun . . . . . Sig. Michele Cachia.
12. Zabbar . . . . . Sig. Agostino Said.
13. Tarxien . . . . . Sig. Giuseppe Montebello.
14. Luca . . . . . Sig. Giuseppe Casha.
15. Curmi . . . . . Sig. Stanislao Gatt.
16. Birchircara . . . . Sig. Vincenzo Borg.
17. Gargur . . . . . Sig. Giovanni Gafà.
18. Nasciaro . . . . . Cavaliere Paolo Parisio.
19. Musta. . . . . Don Felice Calleja, Parish Priest.
20. Lia . . . . . Sig. Salvatore Gafà.
21. Balzan . . . . . Sig. Giuseppe Frendo.
22. Attard . . . . . Notary Saverio Zarb.

The foregoing list cannot but be interesting to the English reader. The names of the villages are, as may be perceived, extremely uncouth, and are evidently of Arabic origin, whilst the names of the members are those still borne by the principal native families of Malta.

Whilst the Congress was engaged in settling the internal affairs of the island, and making provision for its proper government, encouraging letters were received from the King of Naples.

The following letter, written under King Ferdinand's direction by the Prince della Trabea, his Minister of War, to the envoys from Malta, will probably prove interesting to the reader:—

"Palermo, 8th March, 1799.

"GENTLEMEN,

"Amongst the many clear proofs which the King of Great Britain has lately given of his close intimacy with, and sincere friendship for, the King of the Two Sicilies under all circumstances, and especially in the present condition of political events, has been that of employing his maritime forces to avenge the wrongs inflicted by the French on His Sicilian Majesty by the invasion of the island of Malta, and to restore the island to His Majesty—an undertaking seconded and brought to a happy termination by the well-known valour and the wise discretion of the illustrious Admiral Lord Nelson, and by Captain John Ball, commanding the blockade of Malta. In order to facilitate this enterprise, His Majesty has bestowed upon the faithful inhabitants of Malta large succours in the shape of provisions, and now at your request, as envoys from the said island, His Majesty has ordered that there should be issued from the department of artillery, and given to the commander of the English frigate *Terpsichore*, on board of which you are about to embark, 20 cwt. of gunpowder, 100 cwt. of lead, part in bullets and part in sheets, and the quantity of paper required for cartridges, to be delivered to Captain Ball, who will take care to distribute them to those armed persons in the island of Malta who are partisans of the good cause, and occupied in driving out the French. His Majesty predicts that by means of the valid help and the constant

vigilance of Captain Ball and of the British squadron under his command, and with the co-operation of the good Maltese, the whole island will shortly be restored to the possession of His Majesty, who places every reliance on the valour, the constancy, and the good-will of the British arms, as well as in the excellent disposition and in the courage of his loving Maltese subjects.

"This happy augury has its firm foundations in the strong assurances of Admiral Nelson, of Captain Ball, and of the English Government, which assurances, by order of His Majesty, I communicate to you for your own satisfaction and that of the faithful and brave Maltese, to whom it is His Majesty's good pleasure that you should communicate the contents of this royal despatch.

"PRINCE DELLA TRABEA."

The envoys returned to Malta about the middle of March, and having given an account of their mission, they received the unanimous thanks of the members of the Congress. Sir William Hamilton and Lord Nelson had at the same time sent despatches to Captain Ball, ordering him to assume the government of Malta and Gozo in the name of His Sicilian Majesty. This was exactly what the popular leaders wished. They willingly yielded the authority which they had hitherto possessed to the representative of Great Britain, and gladly saw the standard of England waving on their ramparts, although, for form's sake, the white flag of Naples was for the present hoisted beside it.

Whilst every effort was thus being made to establish a regular Government, no exertions were spared to dislodge the French from Valletta. The Maltese would gladly have made an attempt to take the place by assault, but Captain Ball appears to have considered that the attempt would prove unsuccessful. The blockade, therefore, was maintained as strictly as

circumstances permitted, and the artillery from the batteries continued at intervals to pour destruction into the besieged city.

Let us consider for a moment the remarkable political position in which Malta was now placed. A French force was shut up within the walls of its capital city, whilst the inhabitants of the island were besieging the city, aided by the resources of Naples, Russia, Portugal, and Great Britain. The Portuguese Government had intervened evidently without any ulterior political aims, merely as being in alliance with Great Britain, and entertaining a deadly hatred to France. The King of Naples had accepted the sovereignty of the island, proffered to him by the people after they had been abandoned by their legitimate rulers, the Knights of St. John; he therefore felt bound to aid in driving out the French intruders. The Emperor of Russia claimed the right to interfere in the affairs of the island, not only as being opposed to the republican policy of France, but by virtue of the decree of the Order of St. John, which had elevated him to the highest dignity in the Order. As Grand Master he considered himself entitled to possess the island granted to his predecessors by Charles V., and therefore he was interested in driving out the French occupants of Valletta. But what right had the British Government to interfere in the affairs of Malta? Clearly none at all, unless the connection of the Court of St. James with that of Naples, the hereditary enmity which England bore to France, and the necessity of preserving the balance of power in Europe, constituted a right of intervention. And yet, in spite of the doctrine of non-intervention of which we hear so much in these days, it was a most happy circumstance for the people of Malta that Great Britain did intervene, and that, in consequence of that intervention, she acquired the sovereignty of the islands. Under no other power could the Maltese have been so free and prosperous; under no other power could Malta have risen to

its present political importance, and have maintained the *prestige* to which its previous history had fully entitled it.

Whatever politicians, judging by the aid of their theories, may have said at the time as to the right of Great Britain to interfere in the affairs of Malta, the people of that island not only acknowledged the right, but expressed their deep gratitude to the British Government for the assistance rendered in the hour of need. When Lord Nelson, about the beginning of April, wrote to the Congress, announcing that Russian troops were hourly expected in Sicily on their way to Malta, the representatives of the people wrote in reply that they thanked him for the intelligence, and that a petition was about to be addressed by them to the three powers which, with Great Britain, had intervened in the affairs of the island, earnestly requesting that the Government might be entrusted to Captain Ball, in whose integrity, valour, and zeal all the inhabitants expressed the greatest confidence.

I return to the events of the siege. Captain Ball had more than once communicated with the chief of the besieged garrison, and had demanded an unconditional surrender; but General Vaubois had invariably replied that he would not surrender so long as there was the smallest chance of his being able to maintain his ground. After each refusal to surrender, the bombardment from the Maltese batteries had grown more and more vigorous, and the response from the city had been equally energetic. Little or no damage, however, was done on either side. There was, as Dr. Vassallo humorously expresses it, between the belligerents, "the charity of distance;" and the Maltese, whilst anxious to dislodge the French invaders, took great care, in directing their fire upon the city, to save as much as possible both public and private buildings. They were naturally unwilling to reduce to ruin a city in which many of them possessed property, and which they expected shortly to be able to enter in triumph and claim once more as their own.

Their great object was to damage, and, if possible, to destroy the French fleet in the harbour. A frigate called *La Boudeuse* was exposed to the fire of a hastily-constructed battery at the Marsa, and nearly destroyed; whilst at the same time the battery erected on the summit of the hill of Tarxien gave the garrison a great deal of annoyance.

During the months of May and June the English fleet, which had for so long a time been cruising in the immediate neighbourhood of the harbour, put out to sea for several days at a time, and thus gave ships laden with provisions for the French garrison an opportunity of running in and landing their stores. What the object of this manœuvre was, is by no means clear. On one of these occasions three French galliots sailed out of the harbour and captured some small Maltese vessels. The crews of these vessels were honourably treated, and, indeed, eighteen of them were set at liberty and sent on shore, each man having first received, by order of General Vaubois, a present of six francs. On this important incident Ransijat says, writing under date 4th June, "It seemed to me that there was deep policy in this act, whilst the consoling words addressed to these men by the General, which they will not fail to repeat to their fellow-countrymen, cannot but make a deep impression on these unfortunate rebels, especially under the circumstances of their abandonment by the English. This may influence them powerfully to return to their allegiance to us, for thus alone" (viz., by words and acts of kindness) "can we hope to act upon the minds of a people who have always shown themselves sensible of the value of gentle words."

The French general evidently thought that the British ships had withdrawn from the blockade; but on the morning of the 5th June they were again at their posts, keeping watch as vigilantly as ever.

On the 20th June the French general received intelligence,

secretly conveyed to him with the connivance of the officer commanding the British fleet, that several reverses had befallen the republican arms in Italy. At the same time a despatch was forwarded to him from the same officer, requiring him to yield at discretion. As usual, he refused, and therefore preparations were made for a grand assault on the night of the 25th June. The assault was made, but it was unsuccessful.

At midnight, on the 28th June, the festival of St. Peter and St. Paul was ushered in with a tremendous bombardment on all sides. The British ships just outside the harbour took part in the bombardment. This was the first time that the fleet had taken any active part in the siege. The fire, although kept up for some hours, had no perceptible effect on the works, and did not for one moment shake the confidence of the garrison. A few days after, on the 3rd July, the British fleet was reinforced by the addition of a line-of-battle ship, and on the 18th of the same month two more ships and a frigate arrived.

The festival of liberty was again celebrated this year on the 14th July. "The celebration," says Ransijat, "was splendid, notwithstanding the whistling of the balls of the rebels which were flying all around us, especially during the time when we were assembled around the altar of our country singing several patriotic songs, and listening to a discourse delivered by Vaubois."

Towards the end of the month about three hundred of the citizens sought and obtained from the French general permission to leave the city. Provisions were growing daily more and more scarce, and he was anxious to diminish as much as possible the number of non-combatants within the city. On the 29th July, the Maltese, having heard of the re-conquest of Naples and of the fall of the "Parthenopean Republic," after a brief existence of six months, expressed their satisfaction by firing long and repeated volleys of musketry, to the intense

indignation of the French general. A few days after, their joy was still further increased by the arrival of four English ships, from which were landed thirteen hundred men, under the command of Brigadier-General Graham. Captain Ball, on this accession to the force at his disposal, once more sent a demand for the surrender of the city, and once more met with a decided refusal.

The French general expected shortly to see an overwhelming number of Republican troops arrive in Malta to raise the siege of Valletta, and to drive from the island all the enemies of France. A fleet was being fitted out at Toulon for the conquest of Sicily, and a part of this fleet, it was hoped, would be available for service at Malta. There was still a large supply of corn in the Government granaries at Valletta, and abundance of oil in the vats. All other provisions were, as I have already said, extremely scarce, but so long as corn and oil were to be had there was no chance of actual starvation, at least for the garrison.

Up to this time the mortality within the walls of Valletta had not been so great as might have been expected. Ransijat gives the number of soldiers who had died as five hundred and fifty-five, and the number of civilians as two thousand four hundred and sixty-eight, and although his figures are not always to be depended on, yet in this instance a comparison with the statements of contemporary writers shows that he is not far from the truth. "Besides this number," he says, "of soldiers who died from disease, or in consequence of their wounds, we had forty-two killed, amongst whom were five officers. These lost their lives in the defence of our ramparts, or in the sallies against the enemy. There were also forty-three wounded, exclusive of the garrison of Notabile. As regards the number of inhabitants who died from disease, it will certainly appear very considerable when it is recollected that the mortality was greatest in those months in which the

population was reduced to a third of what it had been. But if we bear in mind that amongst those who went out into the country many were seriously ill, we may conclude that if they had remained within the city the epidemic would have been frightful. In the course of the winter," he adds, "many of the inhabitants were subject to a most extraordinary malady, which made them almost entirely blind from nightfall to the following dawn. At daybreak they recovered their sight, which they retained perfect during the whole day. This nocturnal blindness was more frequent amongst the soldiers than amongst the civilians." *

The few Maltese who remained within the walls were now most anxious for surrender. It is said that they wilfully wasted the corn whenever it was served out to them, that the supply within the granaries might the sooner be exhausted, and the garrison thus be driven to capitulate. Surrender, however, was very far from the thoughts of General Vaubois.

Early in September, 1799, the Portuguese fleet returned to Malta, and on the 5th of that month the Marquis of Nizza, the Portuguese admiral, invited Vaubois to a conference in these words: "I consider, sir, that it will be to my advantage and to yours to hold a conference without delay." Vaubois accepted the invitation. The 8th of September at noon was fixed as the time of meeting, and Fort Manoel as the place. The Marquis repaired to the place of meeting, accompanied, much to the surprise of Vaubois, by Captain Ball and another English officer. All were received with the respect due to their rank by the General and his staff. When the customary salutations on both sides had been given, the Marquis at once introduced the subject for which he had requested the conference. Without preamble of any kind he proposed to Vaubois to surrender

* Colonel Porter remarks that "this disease is by no means uncommon in the warmer latitudes, and many instances are recorded of its occurrence whilst the British army was in Egypt. It was also not unknown in the Crimea."

at discretion. "No," replied the French general, "not on any account. If another word is said to me on the subject of a surrender I declare the conference at an end." This reply, of course, put an end to any further negotiation. The conversation turned upon general topics, and all present took part in it without restraint. At the end of three-quarters of an hour they separated with expressions of good-will towards one another, but with a firm determination to maintain their respective positions of besiegers and besieged until circumstances should bring matters to a crisis.

On the 5th October the Marquis of Nizza thought proper again to propose to Vaubois terms of capitulation; but the French general still clung to the hope of speedy succours from France. Nor were his hopes altogether without foundation, for, in spite of the English cruisers, a French naval officer, named Fougues, had succeeded in getting away from Malta, reaching France, and returning with a message from the chiefs of the Republic to the brave garrison of Valletta. The Directory counselled Vaubois to retain his position, and promised speedy assistance.

On the 22nd and 23rd October a well-directed fire from the Maltese batteries did immense damage within the city, and injured many of the French vessels in the harbour. The loss of life was not very great; but the bombardment created such a panic amongst the few remaining civilians that about two thousand of them sought and obtained permission to leave the city. The besiegers began now to suffer very much for want of firewood. The few trees found on the island were cut down, and it is even said that some of the scaling-ladders, which had been prepared with a view to an assault, were broken up and burned.

For some time past the French had noticed that the British flag, which during the summer had been hoisted on the Maltese batteries along with the flag of Naples, was no longer to be

seen. Commenting upon this circumstance, Ransijat says, in his journal of the siege: "I should be inclined to think that the English had lowered their flag in order the better to deceive the Maltese, the King of Naples, and the Emperor of Russia, by letting them imagine that they did not desire to conquer the island for themselves."

The truth is that no deception was necessary in the case of the Maltese people, who were most anxious to place themselves under the protection of Great Britain; but the Governments of Russia and of Naples had manifested some symptoms of jealousy at the appearance of the British flag on the batteries of Malta; and Captain Ball, in a letter to one of the members of the Congress, had expressed an opinion that it was necessary to act with delicacy, in order not to wound the feelings or to invade the rights of the King of Naples; but he added, "His Majesty will, in the end, find it to be his interest to renounce all claim to Malta for ever." In consequence of this expression of opinion, which circumstances fully warranted, the ensign of England was lowered, and the white flag of the House of Bourbon alone floated in the breeze. Hence the conjecture which Ransijat, with his natural and hereditary enmity to "perfidious Albion," has recorded in his journal.

The bombardment of the city was continued at intervals during the month of November. New batteries were erected, with a view to prevent the ships of the enemy from entering the harbour, as the Maltese were well aware that the French were in hourly expectation of succour from Toulon. The condition of the garrison was now beginning to be one of great anxiety, which increased every day. Famine began to produce its wonted effects. Rats and mice were eagerly sought, and greedily devoured. A dead horse, mule, or ass furnished a sumptuous feast. "In order to eke out their scanty rations," says Colonel Porter, "the soldiers had, from an early date in the siege, commenced the cultivation of gardens in the various

ditches and other localities suitable for such operations, and had greatly added to their means of subsistence. So long as their oil and vinegar lasted, the salads which they thus procured reconciled them to the loss of meat, which was latterly issued in very small quantities. Indeed, throughout the siege it is marvellous to perceive the cheerfulness with which the troops underwent hardships and privations sufficiently severe to have induced the most bitter discontent, if not actual mutiny, in their ranks. So far from such having been the case, they aided their superiors by every means in their power, and to the last moment the cry of 'No surrender!' was constantly to be heard."

The sufferings of the garrison were mitigated by their having in the cisterns, which are numerous in Valletta, an abundant supply of water. The besiegers had from the beginning cut off the supply of water brought into the city by Vignacourt's aqueduct; but rain had fallen copiously during the previous winter, and, being received on the flat roofs of the houses, had been conveyed into the cisterns, so that the pain of hunger was not increased by the less endurable pain of thirst.

With the commencement of the year 1800 the difficulties and the sufferings of the French were still further increased. No reinforcement from Toulon had found its way to Malta; but the blockading squadron was strengthened by the arrival of two British ships of the line, the *Queen Charlotte*, on board of which was Admiral Keith, and the *Vanguard*, bearing the flag of Lord Nelson. The arrival of these two ships was the signal for the commencement of fresh hostilities on the part of the Maltese; and the bombardment of the devoted city shortly became more vigorous than ever.

Admiral Keith and Lord Nelson kept most vigilant guard over the harbours of Malta; but, in spite of their vigilance, during the month of February a French merchant-ship, laden with provisions for the garrison, contrived to reach the Great

Harbour, and land her stores. The provisions afforded some relief to the besieged; and their hopes of succour once more revived on hearing from the captain of the merchant-ship that Buonaparte had been created First Consul, and that a new constitution had been established in France on the ruins of the ancient monarchy, which had been shattered by the Revolution.

Some days had passed without any act of hostility on either side, when the Maltese sentinels perceived that the *Guillaume Tell*, which had lain for so many months inactive in the Great Harbour, was being fitted out for sea service. Information was at once sent to the English admiral, who directed that the squadron should invest the mouth of the harbour closely, so as to render the escape of the *Guillaume Tell* impossible. Favoured by the darkness of the night, however, and by the wind, she did contrive to elude the vigilance both of the sentinels on-shore and of the blockading squadron, and made her way out to sea on the 29th March. In the morning she was missed. Several British ships gave chase, and came up with her off Cape Passaro, in Sicily. A gallant fight ensued; but the *Guillaume Tell*, although a powerful eighty-four gun ship, and heroically defended, was taken, and brought back in triumph to Malta. This was a terrible blow to Vaubois, for he had hoped that by her superior speed she would succeed in distancing the English cruisers, and make her way to Toulon, whence she would return laden with men, ammunition, and provisions, and accompanied by a formidable fleet to do battle with his enemies.

In April the strength of the besiegers was increased by the arrival of nine hundred Neapolitan soldiers, under the command of General Fardella.

Hitherto neither English nor any other foreign troops had taken any active part in the hostilities against the city; but, on the 13th June, Captain Ball informed the members of the Congress that General Graham had communicated to him a

plan for the formation of several battalions of volunteers, who should, in concert with the foreign troops then in the island, compel the enemy to surrender the city and to leave the island. Captain Ball expressed his approval of the General's plan, and urged its adoption. The members of the Congress, whilst sanctioning the plan laid before them, prayed Captain Ball to remind the General of the wretched condition of their fellow-countrymen who were shut up within the walls of Valletta. They implored him not to think of directing his fire against private buildings, but only against the fortifications; and as Captain Ball had a short time before informed General Vaubois that no more of the inhabitants of the city would be received by the people in the country, the members added: "Our countrymen being prevented from leaving the city, and being in danger of perishing from the effects of the bombardment, whilst their property is ruined without any injury being done to the enemy, will certainly be driven to desperation."

Meanwhile, General Graham published, on the 19th June, an address in which, after complimenting the Maltese on their patriotism and courage, he advised them to abandon for a few weeks their customary employments, to place themselves under the direction of proper officers, and under the guidance of those whose experience of military affairs would enable them, in the course of a very short time, to recover their city and drive out the French intruders. General Graham was of opinion that the city should not only be more closely besieged, but that it should be stormed. The Maltese expressed their willingness to co-operate with him in every way; but when everything was in readiness for the contemplated attack, Major-General Pigot arrived in Malta in command of the 48th regiment and two companies of the 35th. He at once assumed the command of the land forces, and evidently did not approve of the plans previously formed by General Graham and Captain Ball, for no attempt was ever made by the British troops, or by

the Maltese under the direction of British officers, to take the city by storm.

Towards the close of July, General Pigot demanded a surrender, intimating to the French general that he had by his resistance up to that time given sufficient proof of his valour, and that to prolong the siege was only to prolong the misery of all within the city without any hope of ultimate victory. The French gave on this, as on every former occasion, a decided refusal.

I turn for a moment to the contemporary events on the Continent.

The Emperor Paul I., from being the bitterest enemy of Buonaparte, had become one of his greatest admirers. The brilliant campaign of the French in Italy, which had terminated with the battle of Marengo, had completely turned the tide in favour of the great adventurer. The Czar, although in alliance with England and with Austria, distrusted both those powers. England he had begun positively to hate, whilst his love for Austria, never very strong, was becoming weaker every day. The military success of Buonaparte had dazzled him. The First Consul, conscious of the influence which he had obtained over the Czar, lost no opportunity of increasing it, whilst he employed all means to weaken his attachment to England and Austria. There were in France some six thousand Russian prisoners. Buonaparte was willing to exchange them, but as there were no French prisoners in Russia he offered to exchange them for an equal number of English and Austrian prisoners; but these powers would not consent to the bargain, although the Russians had become prisoners whilst fighting on the same side with them. The refusal of the Governments of England and Austria to accept Buonaparte's offer was most unwise; for it gave him the opportunity which he so much desired of still further obtaining the favour of the Czar by an unexampled act of generosity. He liberated the

Russian prisoners unconditionally, restored their arms and all their effects, and wrote a letter to the Minister of War at St. Petersburg, in which he said that, "England and Austria having shown their unwillingness to grant liberty to the soldiers of the Czar, he would no longer retain those brave men prisoners;" that "he restored them unconditionally to the Emperor; and that this act of his was to be regarded as a proof of his admiration of the Russian army, whom the French had learned to appreciate on the field of battle." This letter was forwarded to Hamburg, to the Russian minister at that place, with a request that it should be sent on to its destination; but the minister replied that the representatives of Russia all over the Continent had received strict orders not to enter into any communication with France. He therefore refused to forward the letter, but being informed of its contents, he communicated them to his Government. This happened in July, 1800. But Buonaparte's policy did not end here. Knowing, as he well did, that Valletta could not long hold out against the besiegers, and that as soon as the French general was driven out of the city, the island would be handed over to the British Government, he despatched a special messenger to St. Petersburg to offer the island to the Czar. As Grand Master of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, who for the last two years had been convoking chapters, conferring crosses, reforming statutes, and planning the utter destruction of the Mohammedans, what could Paul I. desire more than the gratuitous offer of the island of Malta, so long the renowned residence of an illustrious Order? "The First Consul," says M. Thiers, in his "History of the Consulate and the Empire," "could not have touched his heart more effectually than by offering him the island of Malta. The thought was well conceived. Either the English, who were about to obtain possession of it, would consent to give it up, and then it would be snatched from their hands, or they would refuse to give it up,

and then Paul would be likely to declare war against them." It must not be supposed that Buonaparte was ignorant of the advantage of possessing Malta; but since he saw that it was impossible for France to retain possession of it, he was anxious to see it in any hands rather than in those of England. "Buonaparte's offer," continued M. Thiers, "having reached its destination, produced a most decided effect. Paul was profoundly affected, and allowed himself to be carried away with admiration of the First Consul. He immediately selected an old Finland officer, the Baron Sprengporten, formerly a Swedish subject, a most worthy man. He appointed him Governor of Malta, and charged him to put himself at the head of the six thousand Russians who were in France, and to go with this well-disciplined force to take possession of Malta at the hands of the French; and he ordered him to visit Paris on his way, and to express his thanks to the First Consul."

The Czar did not content himself with thanking Buonaparte. He instructed his representative at Berlin to enter at once into communication with the French minister at that capital in order to arrange terms of peace with France.

These transactions between France and Russia took place during the months of July and August, 1800. Apparently the designs of Buonaparte were about to be happily realised; but, so far as Malta was concerned, he was doomed to be disappointed.

The siege was now drawing to its close. During the last two months the sufferings both of the garrison and of the inhabitants within the city had increased fearfully. The French general was ignorant of everything that was going on on the Continent, ignorant of the recent negotiations with Russia, ignorant of the movements of Baron Sprengporten at the head of his six thousand Russians. His provisions were exhausted, and he began to see the necessity of surrendering to the besiegers. First, however, he wished, if possible, to save

from the enemy the two frigates which he had still remaining in the harbour, the *Diane* and the *Justice*. On the night of the 22nd August the two vessels cautiously set sail, and tried to steal away from their moorings. They contrived to get out, but the alarm was given by a Neapolitan sentinel, an English vessel gave chase, and the *Diane* was captured and detained. The *Justice* escaped.

All means of protracting the siege being now completely exhausted, Vaubois on the 2nd September summoned a council of war, at which all the officers, both naval and military, were present. He laid before the council the unhappy condition of the garrison, and proposed a surrender, to which all consented. On the 4th a flag of truce was sent to General Pigot with a proposal to surrender. Pigot at once conferred with General Graham and Captain Ball: the terms of capitulation were arranged and signed the next day by the generals on both sides.

On the 5th September the Maltese, English, and Neapolitan troops took possession of the advanced works of Valletta, and of Forts Manoel and Tigné. On the 7th the French garrison marched out with all the honours of war, and embarking on board transports provided for their accommodation, left the island; whilst Captain Ball and Major-General Pigot, with the 30th, 35th, 48th, and 89th regiments of the line, and a detachment of artillery and engineers, took possession of the city of Valletta. Then, at a meeting of the representatives of the Maltese people, the island of Malta and its dependencies was solemnly ceded to Great Britain, and added to the dominions of the British Crown.

For the last sixty-eight years the Maltese have lived contentedly under the mild and equitable rule of Britain, and have proved themselves not unworthy of the protection afforded to them. We can wish them no greater blessing than that they may long continue to enjoy the shelter of that banner on which the sun never sets.

It was not, however, until the year 1814 that the possession of Malta by Great Britain was sanctioned by the other powers of Europe. In that eventful year, Buonaparte having been banished to Elba, and Louis XVIII. having been proclaimed King of France, a treaty of peace was concluded at Paris between France and Austria, with the concurrence of Great Britain, Russia, and Prussia. The eighth article of that treaty fixed the destinies of Malta in these words:—"The island of Malta and its dependencies shall belong, with full authority and sovereignty, to His Britannic Majesty."

This was not, as some have represented, a bargain entered into by the great powers of Europe without reference to the inhabitants of the islands, for, on the arrival of the news of the Treaty of Paris in Malta, the greatest joy was manifested by the people. For several days festivities were indulged in to celebrate the happy event, and an inscription, which may still be read over the Main Guard opposite the Governor's palace, was placed there with the full concurrence of all classes of the Maltese people. The inscription, which the English traveller who visits Malta may feel a pride in reading, runs thus:—

"Magnæ et Invictæ Britanniæ
Europæ vox et Melitensium amor
Has Insulas confirmant."

CHAPTER XIII.

MALTA UNDER BRITISH RULE.—SIR ALEXANDER BALL TO SIR HENRY BOUVERIE. 1800—1843.

Sir Alexander Ball, 1800.—We have now arrived at that portion of the history of Malta with which we are more immediately concerned. We cannot ignore the fact that the possession of Malta is to Great Britain a matter of supreme importance. The fortifications of Corfu have been destroyed, and the Ionian Islands have been annexed to Greece; but Malta and Gibraltar we will never consent to surrender. Our Indian empire is year by year growing in extent. Malta, by its advantageous position and its splendid harbours, enables us, as a maritime people, to maintain at all times such a naval force in the Mediterranean as shall keep the highway between England and India clear of all intruders. If Malta and Gibraltar were to slip from our grasp, our exclusion from the Mediterranean would follow, and the safety of our Indian possessions would be endangered. The importance of our possession of Malta is therefore not to be measured by its circumference on the map. Small as it is, insignificant as it may seem, it may play a part in the future of England's history more prominent than some of our distant colonies, in comparison with which it is but a speck.

It may be well for the reader to consider carefully the precise political position which Malta occupies in reference to Great Britain.

As has been already related, the French were driven out

of Malta by the indignant inhabitants, assisted by British, Portuguese, and Neapolitan forces, after which the islands of Malta and Gozo were solemnly ceded to the British Crown, Captain Ball promising, in the name of his sovereign, that all the ancient rights and privileges of the people should be preserved.

Malta is therefore not a colony in the sense in which Australia, Canada, and New Zealand are colonies. Neither is Malta a conquered possession like Gibraltar, obtained by arms, and held at the point of the bayonet. Neither, on the other hand, is Malta to be regarded as simply under the protection of Great Britain, as the Ionian Islands were until very recently. The political position of Malta is different from all these.

It is clear that Malta is not a colony, for a colony is an establishment founded in a foreign country by individuals who either voluntarily emigrate from, or are forcibly sent abroad by, the mother-country. No emigration to Malta has ever taken place such as has been going on for many years to Australia and New Zealand, for the simple reason that there is no spare land, the island being barely large enough to support an already overgrown population. The English who go to Malta are gentlemen holding appointments under Government, merchants, and occasionally invalids. Few of these reside there for life, or regard Malta as in any sense their home, which emigrants to a foreign country invariably do.

It is equally clear that Malta was not conquered by, but was ceded to, Great Britain. The events related in the last chapter make this fact quite plain. The cession of Malta and the adjacent islands to the British Crown was the voluntary act of the inhabitants, approved and ratified by all the great powers of Europe.

The position of Malta differs, moreover, from that in which the Ionian Islands lately were, for in those islands the form of government was republican, and all that Great Britain ever

did or could do was to throw her sheltering ægis around them. It would have been the duty of Great Britain, had circumstances required it, to defend the Ionian islanders from foreign invasion, or to prevent the islands from becoming the scene of events likely to disturb the balance of power in Europe. More than this was not promised, and could not have been demanded. The Ionian islanders governed themselves on a republican model, whilst the Lord High Commissioner acted as a balance-wheel to regulate the motion of the political machine, and British soldiers and sailors stood by to guard against all attempts to introduce disorder from without.

By the voluntary act of the inhabitants, Malta, with the neighbouring islands, called its dependencies, were delivered over to the Crown of Great Britain, so that they are, in point of fact, national property, of which the Crown is the guardian, —saving, however, all the rights of individuals to private property which they possessed before the cession, or which they may have acquired by purchase or other lawful means since the cession. The political interests of the people were confided to the Crown, which was bound to see not only that life and property were secure from injury, but that all the inhabitants of the islands were prepared by education to obtain the benefit of free institutions like those of the mother-country.

Let us see now what was the social and moral condition in which the Government of Great Britain found the people of Malta. The Maltese had groaned for nearly three centuries under the yoke of the Order of St. John. No one can admire more than I do the chivalrous character and the military talent which have immortalised the members of that celebrated brotherhood. The Knights of St. John were brave, noble, manly, and actuated by a high sense of honour. They were the type of all that is grand, and of all that is worthy of respect in chivalry. But as political rulers what was their value? They had been brought up in the worst of all schools

for the production of a really enlightened statesman. They were monks and they were soldiers, and they ruled Malta as monks and soldiers rule. A monk can understand little or nothing of the social affections; he is shut up in a little world of his own; he can have no sympathy with the political aspirations of his fellow-creatures. He is trained to habits of blind obedience, and so inured does he become to obey without hesitation any order given to him by his superiors, that every spark of liberty of action is extinguished in him. In the position of the soldier there is something more noble than in that of the monk, but the soldier, no less than the monk, is disqualified from being a safe and enlightened ruler—unless, indeed, as is frequently the case, he happens to be a man who can look beyond the limits of his own profession, and can take a wide and enlightened view of the springs of human action. Implicit obedience to superiors is the unvarying rule in every army, and it is the only rule by which an army can be held together; but in a state, where obedience to authority is carefully inculcated, it should be in every case reasonable obedience—obedience founded not so much on the authority of a superior as on an earnest desire to promote the general good. In every state, therefore, governed on what are called constitutional principles, we find this rational obedience to authority, whilst in every state governed on principles of absolutism, and also in every army and in every convent, we find blind, irrational obedience rendered to those who for a time are invested with power.

That some military men have ruled well both in ancient and in modern times is doubtless true. Tacitus says of Agricola:—"Credunt plerique militaribus ingeniis subtilitatem deesse; quia castrensis jurisdictio, secura et obtusior ac plura manu agens, calliditatem fori non exerceat. Agricola naturali prudentiâ quamvis inter togatos facile justeque agebat."* "It

* Taciti Agricola, cap. 9.

is a common supposition that military men habituated to the unscrupulous and summary processes of camps, where things are carried with a strong hand, are deficient in the address and subtlety of genius requisite in civil jurisdiction. Agricola, however, by his natural prudence, was enabled to act with facility and precision even amongst civilians."

Now if these remarks be well considered, it will be seen, I think, that the Knights of St. John were little able to contribute to the political liberty of the people of Malta. As a matter of fact the people were ground down to the very dust under the rule of the Order. If they ever dreamed of resistance there were two weapons with which they were constantly threatened. The knights held in one hand the sword of the warrior, and in the other the thunderbolts of the "infallible" Church; and between these two tremendous engines of tyranny what choice had the people but to submit?

It is quite necessary to bear these facts in mind in order that the reader may understand the difficult position in which the first British Governors of Malta were placed. The people had not been accustomed to free institutions. They could not appreciate them. Their political education had been so neglected that they could not understand the use of that liberty which the British Government and the British nation desired to bestow upon them. A few educated men amongst the natives of Malta, with more zeal than judgment, demanded the immediate restoration of that form of government which had existed in the islands in the time of Count Roger the Norman, but which had ceased to exist for centuries; and because the Crown and Parliament of Great Britain hesitated to confer on the islanders privileges for which they were quite unprepared, both Crown and Parliament received a very large measure of abuse. But in the course of time, when the people of Malta had been prepared to understand the nature of free institutions, several important changes were made. The

nature of these changes will appear as we proceed with our narrative.

On the 19th June, 1800, General Graham, afterwards Lord Lynedoch, issued an address to the people of Malta, in which he urged them to continue their resistance to the French; and on the 4th September, as has already been related, the terms of capitulation were agreed on between General Vaubois and Major-General Pigot. Two days after, Sir Alexander John Ball made his solemn entry into Valletta. One of his first acts after assuming the government of the islands was to suspend the meeting of the Congress for the reasons above mentioned, and to inform the people that the administration of the civil government should rest solely with himself until further notice. To have acted otherwise would have been to betray weakness, and to inflict permanent injury on an ignorant population which had confided its interests to his keeping.

Early in 1801 Sir A. Ball left Malta for England, leaving Major-General Pigot, the Commander-in-Chief of the garrison, in charge of the civil administration. General Pigot, on the departure of Sir A. Ball, issued a proclamation in which the people were assured that it would be his constant care to promote their happiness. "This," he said, "cannot come but through a just and exact administration of the laws on the part of the governing, and a constant obedience and confidence in their protection on the part of the governed."

The islands were not long governed by a military man. In the summer of 1801 Sir Charles Cameron arrived in Malta as Civil Commissioner. He too published a proclamation soon after his arrival, in which he said—"I embrace with the highest satisfaction the opportunity of assuring you of the paternal care and affection of the King towards you, and that His Majesty grants you full protection and the enjoyment of all your dearest rights. He will protect your churches, your holy religion, your persons, and your property."

The promises made in these and in the preceding proclamations were certainly fulfilled with the utmost fidelity; but still a few discontented spirits urged that the British Government had broken faith with the people of Malta, because the Maltese, newly emancipated from the most galling slavery, unaccustomed to municipal institutions, ignorant of the very meaning of the words "constitutional liberty," were not permitted to govern themselves after the manner of men who had been inured for ages to self-government. No wonder that when the preliminaries of the peace of Amiens came to be signed the British envoy seriously entertained the proposal then made to deliver up Malta and Gozo once more to the Order of St. John. Sir Charles Cameron was only allowed to govern Malta one year. In July, 1802, he left for England, and was succeeded by Sir A. Ball, who had returned to his post after arranging the plan upon which the islands were to be governed with the ministry at home.

On the return of Sir A. Ball to Malta he found the popular leaders still agitating for the re-establishment of the *Consiglio Popolare*, or National Council, which they alleged to have existed in some form or another ever since the time of Count Roger. That the ministry at home was not disinclined to meet the wishes of the people is evident from a letter written by Lord Hawkesbury, and also from a speech of Lord Melville in the House of Lords; but it was felt that until a liberal education had done its work amongst the people, such a council would either be a sham or else would seriously embarrass the action of the representative of the British Crown in Malta.

Lord Hawkesbury's letter was written to Sir John Warren, British Ambassador at St. Petersburg, on the 29th January, 1803. He says, in reference to the Maltese *language*, or Maltese national branch of the Order of St. John, then about to be established under the direction of the Czar of Russia, the new

Grand Master:—"It may be proposed to revive, under such regulations and modifications as may be judged expedient, the National Council which formerly existed in that island, which should form no part of the Order, but which should have a share in the government of the island and a deliberative voice in all its internal concerns."

Lord Melville's speech was delivered on the 23rd May, 1803. After dwelling on the importance of retaining Malta, he says:—"We ought to secure to the Maltese a wise and suitable form of civil government, to be enjoyed by them under the protection of the British power. This object ought to be prosecuted and settled without any delay, so that whenever any new negotiation should be set on foot we might be enabled to say that the people of Malta, under a form of government agreeable to their wishes, were now established under the protection of Great Britain."

In order to make known the wishes of the popular party in Malta to the ministry at home, Mr. John Richards was in 1806 appointed agent in London for the Maltese people. Amongst the instructions given to him were the following: that he should demand—

"1st. A free representation of the people, or Consiglio Popolare.

"2nd. Independent tribunals.

"3rd. A free press.

"4th. Trial by jury.

"In fine, a constitution which shall unite the spirit of our ancient, free, and only legitimate government with that of the English constitution, our religion always being kept inviolate."

The demands were not conceded, and Sir Alexander Ball, once the idol of the Maltese people, was openly denounced as a tyrant of the deepest dye.

In the autumn of 1809, whilst Mr. Richards was still importuning the Colonial Office and insisting on free institutions

being granted to his clients, Sir A. Ball died at the Palace of Sant' Antonio, and the following year Lieutenant-General Sir Hildebrand Oakes was appointed his successor, with the title of Civil Commissioner. The traveller may see the mausoleum of Sir A. Ball above the entrance to the Great Harbour of Valletta, in that part of the fortifications known as the Old Barracca.

Sir Hildebrand Oakes, 1810.—The agitation which had been got up by a few unscrupulous individuals in favour of popular institutions was continued during the administration of Sir Hildebrand Oakes. A petition was signed in 1811 by a large number of persons, who had been persuaded to believe that the British Government had treated the Maltese with gross injustice. Of this petition Sir Hildebrand said, in a proclamation dated 23rd August, 1811—"The King's Civil Commissioner observes with regret that some weak and inconsiderate persons, deceived under specious pretexts, have suffered themselves to become the instruments of a few turbulent and factious individuals. They have been seduced to subscribe a paper purporting to be an application to the King for certain changes in the existing form of government of these islands." The demagogues, on the publication of this document, took care to represent that Sir Hildebrand Oakes had irrecoverably "lost his popularity," and that the British Government, of which he was the representative, had acted in an "arbitrary and tyrannical manner." Three years of ineffectual struggling against the influence of the popular leaders followed, and at the end of that time Sir Hildebrand was glad to retire from the government of the islands, and to welcome as his successor Sir Thomas Maitland, the most absolute, and yet, by the confession of the Maltese even in the present day, the most highly respected of all the Governors who have been destined to rule over Malta.

Sir Thomas Maitland, 1813.—Sir Thomas Maitland arrived in Malta on the 5th October, 1813, and at once issued a proclamation declaring it to be—"His Royal Highness's gracious

determination henceforth to recognise the people of Malta and Gozo as subjects of the British Crown; to secure to the Maltese in the fullest manner the free exercise of their religion; to maintain their ecclesiastical establishment; to introduce such amelioration in the proceedings of the courts of law as will secure to every one the certainty of speedy and effective justice; to make such improvement in the laws themselves as past experience or change of circumstances may have rendered advisable and necessary; and, in short, to adopt every measure that may be requisite to secure to the inhabitants a full share of that happiness, wealth, security, and prosperity fortunately enjoyed by all the subjects of the British empire in every part of the world."

Matters had arrived at such a pitch in Malta that a Governor of Sir Thomas Maitland's stamp was greatly needed. No man of timid disposition or of easy temper could have administered the government of the islands in the face of the difficulties which then existed. The people, few of whom could read or write, none of whom could see any reason to regret the establishment of British rule in Malta, were persistently told by a few unscrupulous demagogues that the re-establishment of the National Council was absolutely necessary to the completion of their political happiness, and being told this, they, as a matter of course, believed it. Petitions were circulated amongst the population, and to these petitions every one who could write was implored to affix his signature. Many did so, and these petitions were sent to the Governor to be forwarded to England and laid before the House of Commons. Sir Thomas, without very carefully considering whether he was or was not exceeding the limits of his authority, immediately suppressed the municipal body called the *Università*, which had, under pretext of managing the finances of some of the charitable institutions, become a kind of Jacobin club which impeded on every side the beneficent action of the Government. Another body of

four persons, called "jurats," had long had the management of the grain department, and had taken care to manage it with a view to their own private interests rather than to the interests of the public. This body Sir Thomas also extinguished. His resolution to rid himself of these two impediments in the way of improvement was communicated to the public in these words:—"His Excellency feels himself now called upon to come to the determination of abolishing *in toto* the several establishments of jurats within these islands, from the commencement of the year 1819, from which period the following arrangements will take place. Three commissioners will be appointed by Government, under the title of 'The Commissioners of the Board of Supply,' who will conduct the whole of the concerns within these islands relative to the purchase or sale of grain, or of cattle if necessary, on account of Government, under instructions to be furnished to them for the purpose. The whole of the property and other revenues at present attached to the several establishments of jurats in these islands will be transferred, from the 1st January, 1819, to the collector of His Majesty's land revenue." This measure was called at the time "harsh, tyrannical, and unjust;" but many of those who used this language lived to see the wisdom of Sir Thomas Maitland's conduct in reference to these jurats. Some who are now living speak in the highest terms of the prudence, the vigour, and the manliness of his character, and of the ability which marked his administration. Sir Thomas was no ordinary man. To the vigorous measures which he adopted we owe the preservation of the people of Malta from the injurious influence of a knot of agitators who would, if they had been left uncontrolled for a few years, have rendered government in an island inhabited by an ignorant and excitable race next to impossible. It is true that he was sometimes unnecessarily harsh. His mode of dealing with the Maltese was more like that of an Oriental despot than like that of the representative of a con-

stitutional monarch; but he well knew that the Maltese mind possesses all the attributes of the Oriental and few of the European races, and that decision, vigour, and firmness are required in the ruler of a tribe of Arabs. Time has shown that he was right. There are intelligent natives of Malta still alive who recollect the palmy days of "King Tom," as he was familiarly called, and who all unite in asserting that Malta was never so well governed as in those days. The mild rule, the kind, conciliating spirit of some of Sir Thomas' successors, was neither understood nor appreciated by the native population of Malta; but the imperious mandates, the stern strong will of Sir Thomas Maitland, are even now referred to in terms of the highest admiration.

Amongst the beneficial measures introduced by Sir Thomas Maitland were the reform of the laws of Malta and the organisation of the courts of justice on a plan entirely new. On the subject of the administration of justice in Malta I shall have a few remarks to make in another chapter. There still remains much to be done in Malta before it can be said that justice is impartially administered in its courts of law; but the reform introduced by Sir Thomas Maitland was a step in the right direction, a reform urgently needed and wisely carried out.*

* The following anecdote is told of Sir Thomas Maitland:—When he was Governor of Malta, and Sir John Sewell, Chief Justice, they were in the habit of taking afternoon rides together. The Governor had had a dispute with some of the Maltese, over whose property he considered the Government possessed certain rights. Whilst riding with the Chief Justice he stated his case, and obtained an opinion which coincided with his own view of the matter on every point. A suit was soon after commenced, which in time came before Sir John Sewell for his decision. To Sir Thomas Maitland's great surprise and disgust, sentence was given in strong and clear terms *against* the Government. On the first occasion which he could find or make, Sir Thomas expressed his surprise to the Chief Justice, adding, "Why, Sir John, you gave me an opinion directly contrary to your decision." The Chief Justice replied: "Sir Thomas, that is impossible. I never gave an opinion on any case that was likely to come before me as a judge." Sir Thomas then reminded the Chief Justice that it was when they were out riding. The information raised a smile on the judge's countenance, and he said, "Ah! I see it, Sir Thomas; that was a riding opinion. I

Sir Thomas' administration lasted for the unusually long period of eleven years, and so great was the confidence reposed in him by the King and by the ministry, that he would doubtless have been permitted to govern the islands for many years longer had he lived. His death occurred on the 17th January, 1824. During part of the time that he governed Malta and Gozo he was also entrusted with the supreme military and civil command of the Ionian Islands, which made it necessary for him sometimes to be absent from Malta. On the occasion of these periodical visits to the Ionian Islands, the government of Malta was entrusted to the senior military officer.*

MARQUIS OF HASTINGS, 1824.—The Most Noble the Marquis

never pay any attention to anything that looks like law when I am out riding, and I always adopt the opinions of my companions. It tends to make the ride healthier, as well as more agreeable."

* See Appendix.

It was during the governorship of Sir Thomas Maitland that the remarkable trial of Charles Christopher Delano and others, the crew of the brig *William*, of Liverpool, for piracy, took place.

The circumstances under which the act of piracy was committed were the following:—The brig *Helen*, of Dartmouth, of which Richard Cornish was master and part owner, sailed from Liverpool for Genoa and Leghorn, laden with a general cargo. When off Cape de Gatt the *Helen* was fired into by the crew of a strange-looking vessel, which afterwards proved to be the *William* of Liverpool. The captain of the *Helen*, being unprepared for resistance, at once hove to, on which a party of men from the *William* boarded and took possession of the vessel. The most valuable part of the cargo of the *Helen* was then removed on board the *William*, after which the ship was scuttled and left to go down with all her crew on board. From this perilous position, however, the *Helen* and her crew were rescued by the intervention of a Greek brig, bound from Cadiz to the Levant. In time the facts became known to the authorities at Malta; the *William* was seized at Smyrna, and her captain and crew conveyed to Malta for trial, on a charge of piracy on the high seas. The trial resulted in the conviction of eight of the prisoners, who were condemned to be hanged on board their own ship in the harbour of Valletta. It was further ordered by the court that the bodies of four of the prisoners should be hung on gibbets, after death, beneath Fort Ricasoli, and the bodies of the other four buried beneath the gibbets. The sentence was rigorously carried out on the morning of the 4th of February, 1820, in the case of six of the unfortunate men, whilst two had their sentence respited on the spot, after the execution of their associates, by a warrant to that effect from Sir Thomas Maitland, issued at ten o'clock on the preceding night.

of Hastings, who had filled the office of Governor-General of India, was the successor of Sir Thomas Maitland as Governor of Malta. He arrived in the island on the 7th June, 1824, and ruled for little more than two years. Of his administration there is little to be said. He is remembered rather for his princely hospitality, his genial nature, his honesty of purpose, and his amiable disposition than for any public act of importance. His death took place on the 20th November, 1826. Under the cavalier of St. John, within a small grove of trees, the visitor may see the tomb beneath which his remains rest. The bastion which surrounds his tomb has been known ever since as "Hastings Bastion."

Sir Frederick Ponsonby, 1827.—On the 15th February, 1827, Sir Frederick Cavendish Ponsonby arrived in Malta as Governor. During his administration a Council was established in Malta, but it was not the *Consiglio Popolare*, for which an insignificant clique still continued to clamour. The Council was composed of seven members, four of whom were Englishmen, holding offices within the island. The three unofficial members were selected by the Governor, two from the chief landed proprietors, and the third from the principal native merchants.

Great dissatisfaction was expressed about the constitution of this Council, and several English writers, in a spirit of ardent liberalism, espoused the cause of the islanders, whom they represented as a grossly-injured people. One of these writers, Mr. R. M. Martin, in his "History of the British Colonies," said:—"History proves that Malta, from the time of the Carthaginians upwards, owed the greatness which it exhibited at various periods to its being a free port; and it has always declined when its commerce was checked by duties and restrictions, or when treated as a mere military post. Our Government has unfortunately been disposed to regard it in the latter light; *the people are denied the exercise of political rights*, free

public discussion is prohibited, military Governors, military secretaries, and military officials abound, and little else is considered but how the revenue may be augmented to the maintenance of salaries and patronage." Now, to those who are ignorant of the character and the circumstances of the Maltese people, it may appear, on reading such a statement as the above, that the British Government had treated the islanders with great unfairness, if not with gross injustice. But residence in the island, and acquaintance with the people, cannot fail to convince every really impartial person that the way in which Malta was governed for the first thirty or forty years after we obtained possession of it was the very best way under existing circumstances. It was always, I believe, the wish of the authorities at home to grant to the Maltese the exercise of political liberty and all the benefits of free institutions. It never was their intention to continue to rule as Sir Thomas Maitland ruled. But it is quite evident that before the people in any country can be allowed a share in the government of that country, they should be educated and made to understand the true nature of government, and the exact position which each individual occupies in the state. An absolute Government is best suited to a people in a condition of ignorance; and just in proportion as education progresses, the value and the importance of liberal institutions are felt. The Tudors governed England with absolute authority, and their government was the best that could have been devised for the times in which they lived; but when the Stuarts attempted to govern England in the same way, they were hurled from power by the people, who had made great advances in the interval. Now, to compare great things with small, in England the people have generally been in advance of the Government; whilst in Malta the British Government has always been in advance of the people. The Government has always manifested a wish to grant the Maltese every political privilege;

but even now, after the lapse of nearly seventy years, the people are not prepared to appreciate a council which shall be really the exponent of public opinion amongst them.

Anxious to try the experiment of free institutions in Malta, and willing to silence by concession the clamour of the popular leaders, the Home Government empowered Sir Frederick Cavendish Ponsonby to issue a proclamation on the 1st May, 1835, notifying "the creation and establishment of a Council of Government within the island of Malta;" but as four of the members of whom the Council was composed were Government officials, and the other three were selected by the Governor, it will at once be perceived that the people were still excluded from any share in the legislative power.

The administration of Sir Frederick Ponsonby lasted for nine years, during which time his place was frequently filled by Acting Governors, who were appointed by him to discharge his duties during his temporary absence from the island. Amongst the officers who were thus appointed were Colonel O'Connell, of the 73rd regiment; Colonel Warburton; Colonel Morshead; Colonel Balneavis; Colonel (afterwards Sir George) Brown; Colonel Sir Charles Gordon; Colonel Sir Howard Elphinstone; Colonel Cardew; and Colonel Evans.

During the time that Malta was governed by the distinguished officers above mentioned, the party which demanded the establishment of what were called "popular" institutions did not cease to agitate and to procure signatures to numberless petitions. It was alleged that "not only the Governors of the island, but His Majesty's ministers also, had contributed to deprive the Maltese of the possession of their rights, and such conduct certainly confirms the idea of the Maltese, that in having offered their island to Great Britain, they, instead of becoming subjects of His Majesty, became vassals of his servants, who delegated other inferior servants and their satellites to govern them according to their wishes or interests."

Nothing could be more unfair than this language, but the unscrupulous agitators who used it continued to use it until the people, who had never before known what it was to enjoy rational liberty, were induced to believe, contrary to their better judgment, that they were really misgoverned by their British rulers.

On the 18th May, 1832, a petition signed by some of the householders of Valletta was presented to the Governor in Council. It appeared, however, that those who had signed it were not unanimous in their opinion as to its contents. Some desired to make alterations and modifications in it, others wished it to remain in its original form. In consequence of this difference of opinion, Sir F. Ponsonby declined to forward the petition. Two petitions were therefore prepared and signed. Each expressed the views of a party; but both petitions agreed in demanding a reform in the constitution of the Council, a free press, and the promulgation of a regular code of laws—demands which are reasonable enough when made by an enlightened people, but ridiculous when made without the consent of the people by a few demagogues who had their own ends to serve, whilst the people remained ignorant and uncivilised, and ever ready to crouch at the feet of a tyrannical priesthood.

One of the complaints constantly made against the Government of Malta at the time of which I am writing was that free trade in corn was not permitted, and that the Government, by means of its Grain Department, retained a monopoly of the corn trade in its own hands. Immense exertions were made to throw open the trade in corn, and when the Government at last yielded, what was the result? For the Government monopoly was substituted a monopoly of the trade by a few capitalists. The Government was content to carry on the trade without reserving any profit but such as was necessary to pay all legitimate expenses. Corn was then as cheap as it could possibly be, and the poor had good bread at a very low price.

But no sooner had the Government monopoly been abolished than two or three speculators bought up every cargo that arrived in the island, and in the name of free trade realised enormous fortunes. Bread has never since been cheap in Malta; and one may now hear the Maltese sigh for the halcyon days of Government monopoly and cheap bread. Rational as are the principles of free trade, they were not applicable to the condition of Malta forty years ago. The British Cabinet foresaw the consequence to the poor of throwing the trade open to public competition. The capitalists who have since swamped the market longed to accumulate fortunes, and were perfectly unscrupulous as to the means of doing so. Hence the opposition which they offered for years to the local Government. *Hinc illæ lachrymæ!*

There are at the present time nearly six thousand persons in Malta engaged in commerce. Of this large number few, very few, have realised large fortunes. The rest drudge on in obscurity all their days on incomes which would be considered small by any mechanic in England. Dozens of hungry brokers are at all times ready to resort to any meanness for the sake of a trifling profit. Hundreds of so-called merchants embark their small capital in mercantile speculations, but are unable to compete with the large capitalists, and all that they can expect to do is to eke out a bare competency and to keep the wolf from the door.

Harassed by the never-ending complaints which arrived from Malta, wearied with the conflicting opinions embodied in the numerous petitions which reached the Colonial Office, the Imperial Government resorted to an expedient which would at least have the effect of silencing popular clamour for a time, and appointed a commission to inquire into the pretended grievances of the Maltese people.

The Commissioners were John Austin, Esq., barrister-at-law, and George Cornewall Lewis, Esq., afterwards Sir George

Cornewall Lewis, Bart., the able Secretary of State for War. They arrived in Malta on the 25th October, 1836.

The Report of the Commissioners recommended some changes in the government of Malta and Gozo, and most of the recommendations contained in the Report were adopted by the Cabinet. I will not weary the reader with extracts from that Report, but, what is more to the purpose, I will lay before him one or two extracts from the private letters of the late Sir George Lewis, written to friends at home in 1837, and certainly not intended for publication, but, nevertheless, published for general information in the *Edinburgh Review* in 1863. These extracts will serve to confirm what I have said above as to the ignorance and imbecility of the great mass of the people of Malta thirty or forty years ago. Sir G. Lewis says, "We found ourselves on our arrival, much to our surprise, floating down the full tide of popularity. We made a sort of triumphal entry—of course against our will—into the town. The streets were illuminated at night, and we were annoyed with all kinds of marks of respect. The state of things, however, has not been of long endurance; and we are already beginning to think of rotten eggs and dead cats. The people evidently thought, or were told, that we came out with a Maltese Magna Charta in our pocket; and when we summoned the chief complainants, and began to talk of inquiry, they were manifestly quite surprised, and seemed to think that we had merely to give a grind or two, and out would come a whole code of laws ready made. After three days of insane declamation on the part of the complainants, and of 'damnable iteration' on our part, they have at last begun to perceive that it will be necessary for us to investigate a subject before we report on it, and that in order to investigate we must take evidence. This sequence of propositions, which in England may seem tolerably clear, has only become manifest to our gentlemen by means of a long succession of the severest intellectual throes. It would have edified you

to see the gravity which we maintained during the most ludicrous parts of the touching patriotic pathos addressed to us. The people are an Arab race, descended from the Saracens who obtained possession of the island. Their physiognomy bears a striking resemblance to the Jewish. They are a gloomy people; they never seem to laugh, or sing, or dance; their amusements, if such they can be called, are of a religious cast, such as processions on saints' days. They are exceedingly ignorant; and not unnaturally, as there has been no education for the poor, very little for the rich, and no free press. They are, however, by no means wanting in acuteness and ability. Their practical talent is indeed remarkable; and in this respect they appear to great advantage even by the side of the English, who, with their descendants, exceed all other nations in this quality. There is a pernicious race of nobles who transmit their titles to all their sons, together with fortunes varying from £500 to £40 or £50 a year, and a self-imposed inability to follow any money-making occupation. These people are ignorant, narrow-minded, stupid, and rapacious of public money; and it would be well if their titles could be abolished. As, however, they are now excessively poor, and they have no means of recruiting their fortunes by rich marriages, a few more descents and divisions of property must confound them with the middle and working classes. There is also a numerous body of priests, more than a thousand, including the regulars, to a population of one hundred and twenty thousand. The priests are, for the most part, bigoted and ignorant; but their influence has considerably declined of late years, and their incomes are most pitiful, varying from £10 to £30 or £40 a year. The merchants, the advocates, the doctors, and the Government *employés* form the really valuable part of the population. The misery which prevails among the mass of the people is caused by the excess of their numbers. The great and unnatural commerce drawn into Malta by the Berlin and

Milan decrees gave a stimulus to population, and also accustomed the working classes to a higher standard of living, from which they have now fallen."

The reader may be able, from the foregoing extract, to form some idea of the character and social condition of the people whose acknowledged leaders had for many years past been clamouring for free institutions "similar to those which prevailed in the mother-country."

The result of the visit of Mr. Austin and Mr. Lewis was that several alterations were effected in the local administration. The censorship of the press was abolished by an Ordinance in Council dated 14th March, 1839, and immediately after a host of vile and scurrilous publications inundated the island, to the disgust of all sober-minded men, who wished, and openly expressed their wish, that the censorship should be restored. Many periodicals were issued which dragged on a miserable existence, and then died away and were for ever forgotten. Some of them have survived to this moment, and are now generally conducted respectably, and with all regard to decorum, but display very little ability. Those who know Malta, however, and have marked the tendency of many of the local newspapers, can hardly believe that a free press has been a very great boon to its inhabitants. The Commissioners, besides recommending the abolition of the censorship of the press, also recommended alterations in the working of the Custom-house Department. Many changes were effected, in consequence of their Report, in customs and other dues: duties on goods for transhipment were abolished, and moderate fixed duties were established on a few articles of general consumption, thus insuring a fixed revenue to Government. The charitable institutions, too, were reorganised, several sinecure situations were suppressed, departments were created, salaries that were thought to be disproportionate to the work done were lowered, and natives were declared eligible to certain offices from which

hitherto they had been excluded. Three situations were reserved for Englishmen, those of Chief Secretary, First Assistant-Secretary, and Auditor-General. The system of primary instruction was reorganised, and several schools were opened in the country districts. The courts of justice were remodelled, and their procedure rendered more simple, whilst the police were increased in numbers, and established on the same footing as the police in England.

Sir Henry F. Bouverie, 1836.—Three weeks after the arrival of the Commissioners, Sir Henry Frederick Bouverie assumed the supreme command, Sir F. Ponsonby having remained in England and resigned his appointment. On the death of Sir F. Ponsonby, which occurred soon after, a monument was erected to his memory by public subscription; a proof, if proof were needed, that the people of Malta really valued and appreciated his government, and that the opposition to him arose, not from the people, but from a few selfish, unquiet, and interested individuals. Sir F. Ponsonby's monument is a very conspicuous object, and presents itself to the view of the traveller who enters the Marsamuscetto or Quarantine Harbour. It is situated immediately above the anchorage of the Peninsular and Oriental Company's steamers.

Sir Henry Bouverie was one of the most popular Governors that ever ruled over Malta. He paid great attention to the construction of roads, and to the draining of the upper portion of the Great Harbour known as the Marsa. In company with one or more of his aides-de-camp, it was his custom to walk out nearly every afternoon for exercise, and wherever any public work was going on, the Governor was seen directing the work, encouraging the men, and giving the benefit of his experience to the superintendent.

The great event of the administration of Sir Henry Bouverie was the visit paid to Malta by the Dowager Queen Adelaide. The following narrative of Her Majesty's visit is abridged from

the account given in the *Malta Government Gazette* of Wednesday, the 5th of December, 1838 :—

"It being already known, on Thursday and Friday last, that Her Majesty the Queen Dowager was at Syracuse, great anxiety was shown by the people of Malta for her arrival; and on the latter day, at about eleven o'clock, a sail was descried on the horizon, which soon was discovered to have the royal standard flying at her mast-head, and by signal was known to be the *Hastings*. As a light wind was blowing from the west, the *Rhadamanthus* was immediately ordered by the Naval Commander-in-Chief to get up her steam for the purpose of towing the *Hastings* into port. At half-past three o'clock this beautiful steam-ship, with her yards and booms manned, was seen very steadily conducting the two-decker to the mouth of the Great Harbour. The works of Valletta, and the points of St. Angelo and Senglea, were crowded with spectators, and the afternoon being extremely fine, and the beauty of the scene being heightened by the presence of a great part of the squadron, under the command of Admiral Sir Robert Stopford, consisting of five ships of the line, a large frigate, and two smaller vessels, all at anchor and in the finest order, the excitement was universal and the general feeling most loyal. (The ships were the *Princess Charlotte*, one hundred and four guns; the *Asia*, eighty-four; the *Vanguard*, eighty; the *Bellerophon*, eighty; the *Minden*, seventy-four; the *Barham*, fifty; the *Carysfort*, twenty-six; and the *Wolverine*, sixteen.) A royal salute, fired by alternate guns from Forts Ricasoli and St. Elmo, announced the entrance of Her Majesty into port, and shortly afterwards, upon a signal from the flag-ship, twenty-one guns were fired from each of the men-of-war. As the smoke cleared away, the yards were observed to be manned by the gallant tars in blue jackets and white trousers in the most regular and precise order.

"The Governor, Sir Henry Frederick Bouverie, who, with his staff, went to the mouth of the harbour in his own boat to meet

the *Hastings*, and accompanied her to her moorings, was, immediately on the ship being brought up, admitted to the presence of Her Majesty on the quarter-deck, to whom his Excellency, as well as Admiral Sir Robert Stopford, the Naval Commander-in-Chief, was presented by Lord Howe. Her Majesty was then graciously pleased to signify her intention of landing the next day at two o'clock.

"THE LANDING.—The disposition of the troops for this auspicious occasion had already been made known by a public notice, in which Sir Henry Bouverie, with a full knowledge of the attachment of the Maltese people to the British Crown and Royal Family of England, contented himself with announcing that the Government offices would be illuminated; and he felt that he could not do better than leave the rest to the good taste and correct feeling of the inhabitants. In this our excellent Governor was not disappointed. On Saturday morning all was bustle; little or no business was done; everybody was devising the best means, and seeking the most advantageous post, to get a sight of Her Majesty as she landed or passed; the note of preparation for a general illumination was heard in all quarters, and quickly was erected (by subscription amongst the Maltese) a triumphal arch across the Strada Reale. At half-past one o'clock the 77th regiment, which was appointed to receive the Queen on the mole below the Calcara Gate, had taken up its ground and extended its file to the gate, whence the road was lined by Royal Marines, and the 47th and 59th regiments, to the Porta Reale; the Royal Malta Fencible Regiment was extended along the Strada Reale; and the 92nd Highlanders formed the guard of honour in front of the Palace.

"At two o'clock precisely all eyes were directed to the shipping. The men-of-war were suddenly dressed in colours; the first gun of a royal salute was fired from the *Hastings*, which was taken up as before by all the ships, whose yards were simultaneously manned; and between two lines of boats, ex-

tending from the ship to the shore, a barge in which the Queen and the ladies of her suite sat, steered by the commander of the *Hastings*, was seen to advance, whilst the sailors on each line tossed their oars as Her Majesty passed. The scene, favoured by the finest weather, was at this moment beautiful beyond description. A gentle breeze, just sufficient to display the gay tints of the flags, under the influence of an autumnal sun, the roaring of the cannon, the good order of the multitudes whose eyes were all directed to one object, gave it a magnificent character, which can scarcely be conceived in a less resplendent climate or in a less clear atmosphere. The presence of royalty, the beauties of nature, the perfection of science and art in the construction of those immense engines of war floating on the water, the military parade and splendid uniforms on shore, the waving of handkerchiefs and the general joy of the people—all contributed to the enchanting effect, which was increased by the gracious smile of Her Majesty as she ascended the platform and was received by our gallant Governor. A salute of twenty-one guns from the Fort of St. Angelo now announced to the people of Malta that a royal foot had stepped on its soil—that the island possessed the beloved QUEEN ADELAIDE, the chosen consort of our late revered monarch, William IV."

The visit of the Queen lasted three months, during which time she endeared herself to the native population by her unaffected kindness and by her royal bearing. She has left behind her an enduring monument in the Collegiate Church of St. Paul, of which she laid the foundation-stone on the 20th of March, 1839. The church was erected at her sole expense, and cost £18,000. It was consecrated and opened for divine service on the 1st of November, 1842, by the Right Rev. Dr. Tomlinson, first Bishop of Gibraltar.

In the month of May, 1841, Sir Henry Bouverie, having governed with very great credit to himself and with very great

benefit to the people for five years, resigned his appointment, and returned to England. Colonel Cardew was invested with the supreme command until the nomination of a new Governor; but such was the affection of the Maltese for Sir H. Bouverie, that a petition very numerously signed was forwarded to the Queen, requesting her to reappoint him; and the month of November found Sir Henry once more the occupant of the Palace in Malta.

The senseless clamours which for years past had been heard, were stilled during Sir H. Bouverie's administration; the press, which on its first liberation from restraint had been rampant, learned moderation; commerce flourished; useful public works were carried on; the people began to perceive that under British rule they really enjoyed the utmost liberty, and that their lot was enviable when compared with the lot of their Sicilian and Italian neighbours. There were still to be found in the island men who for their own base purposes wrote and published inflammatory articles against the most tolerant and beneficent Government in the world; but the Governor's wisdom and prudence lived down all opposition, and the most prejudiced could not deny that the material prosperity of Malta and its dependencies was far beyond what they had ever before enjoyed.

In the midst of his useful labours, Sir H. Bouverie's health compelled him to seek that repose in England to which his long services entitled him, and he solicited the Home Government to appoint a successor. Sir Patrick Stuart was selected to rule over Malta. He arrived in the island on the 14th of June, 1843; and on the following day Sir H. Bouverie sailed for England, carrying with him the grateful affection of the people of Malta and Gozo, who to this day speak of him not merely in terms of respect, but as they would speak of an old and valued friend whose memory they delighted to cherish.

CHAPTER XIV.

MALTA UNDER BRITISH RULE.—SIR PATRICK STUART TO SIR WILLIAM REID. 1843—1858.

Sir Patrick Stuart, 1843.—An opinion had been expressed by some of the writers in the local newspapers, and had been gaining ground for some years, that Malta ought not to be governed by a military man. It was alleged that government by a military man was a "badge of conquest," and that this was a hardship, for the islands had not been conquered, but ceded. Sir Patrick Stuart was not the man to reconcile these discontented islanders to military rule. Punctual in the discharge of all his duties, rigid in exacting obedience from others, conscientious in the highest degree, he ruled as only soldiers know how to rule. The Council of Government over which he presided was not calculated to place any check on his authority; but no check was required, for the strictness of his rule was tempered by sound judgment; and Sir Patrick Stuart might have continued to rule Malta for many years without exciting the enmity even of the so-called "patriotic" party, if he had not inadvertently come into collision with the religious prejudices of the people.

It had been the custom for centuries to celebrate the Carnival on the four days immediately preceding Ash Wednesday. In Malta, as in Italy and other Roman Catholic countries, the season of Carnival was a season of universal license, degenerating not unfrequently into licentiousness. To the mind of a Protestant of deep religious feeling as Sir Patrick Stuart was,

and especially of a Scotch Protestant, taught from his earliest infancy to "keep the Sabbath-day holy," it appeared no less than a crime to sanction the buffoonery and the unbridled gaiety of a Carnival mob in the public streets on that day, and Sir P. Stuart resolved that, if possible, he would withhold his sanction. The knights had been accustomed to give by proclamation formal permission to indulge in all the revelry of the Carnival, and this permission the British Governors had continued annually to give. It was the custom, in drawing up the proclamation, to state explicitly that the Carnival would be held on the Saturday, Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday immediately preceding the first day of Lent. Sir P. Stuart, without expressly forbidding the Carnival on Sunday, purposely omitted the word Sunday in the proclamation which he issued, and in doing so he hoped that all sensible people would take the hint, and would refrain from taking part in the gaieties of the Carnival on a day which ought to be devoted to religious observances. But Sir P. Stuart did not understand the temper of the people of Malta. As soon as the proclamation appeared, expressions of discontent were heard on all sides. The ancient rights of the people, it was said, had been invaded. The Governor, it was whispered, had entered into an agreement with the Protestant bishop to enforce a rigid observance of the Sabbath, to which the inhabitants of Roman Catholic countries were not accustomed; and this, it was declared, was the first step towards a system of proselytising which was shortly to be inaugurated. The fact that the Bishop of Gibraltar, Dr. Tomlinson, was the son-in-law of Sir P. Stuart, gave some weight to this latter assertion. There were not wanting those who, to suit their own purposes, fanned the flame of discontent, and on the evening of Saturday, the first day of the Carnival of 1846, the city of Valletta was the scene of a demonstration intended to express the popular dissatisfaction. Everything, however, passed off quietly, the Governor wisely taking no

notice of the insults offered to himself personally and to the sovereign whom he represented. On the following day, Sunday, large numbers of the peasantry came into Valletta, and about two o'clock in the afternoon a mob consisting of many thousands was assembled in the principal streets of the city. It was perceived by those who had charge of the maintenance of the public peace that the people had so far observed the Governor's proclamation that no one appeared in the streets in any kind of fancy dress, but horses, mules, asses, dogs, and other animals were led about decorated with ribbons, and otherwise fantastically ornamented, whilst the remark ran through the multitude that the Governor's prohibition did not extend to the brute creation. At the same time several young men walked in solemn procession, along the square opposite the Governor's palace, dressed in the conventional black suit and white necktie of the Protestant clergyman, whilst each held in his hand a book resembling a Bible. It was at once seen that this was intended to resent the supposed interference of the Protestant bishop and clergy with the rights of the people. Whilst all this was going on, the bell of St. Paul's Church—the church erected by the good Queen Adelaide—was heard summoning the British residents to the usual afternoon service. The whole multitude was instantly seized with frenzy. The cry was raised, "To the Protestant church! let us pull it down!" and in a few minutes the building was surrounded by a frantic crowd, yelling, hissing, shouting, blaspheming, and threatening destruction to every Protestant in the island. The congregation within the church was, as might have been expected, small; but the officiating clergymen determined to proceed with the service, in spite of the smallness of the number of worshippers within, and the mad uproar of the populace without. The Government Chaplain read the prayers, and the Rev. Canon Markham, of Windsor, who happened to be residing at the time in Valletta, preached the sermon; but not one syllable of either prayers or

sermon could be heard by the congregation. The few Protestants in the church expected every moment to see the crowd rush in and wreak their vengeance upon them. No one, however, ventured to take this step. The popular rage vented itself in shouts, and threats, and yells for upwards of an hour, and then the mob moved away in the direction of the Governor's palace. On St. George's Square the rioting was resumed, and towards five o'clock it was evident that some violence was intended. Some of the ringleaders of the mob ventured to the foot of the staircase leading to the Governor's private apartments in the palace, and made use of insulting expressions to the sentinel; who, however, bravely kept his post, and with fixed bayonet prevented any of the mob from forcing an entrance. Sir Patrick Stuart, observing all that was taking place from the balcony of the palace, and thinking it was now time to make some effort to restore quiet, sent an order to the captain in charge of the Main Guard to turn out the guard and clear the square. Orders were also conveyed to the police to arrest any one taking a prominent part in the disturbance of the public peace. Fortunately for the Maltese, the guard on that day consisted of a party of their fellow-countrymen, belonging to the Royal Malta Fencible Regiment, who obeyed the Governor's orders with as little vigour as possible. Two or three of the mob received slight bayonet wounds, about twenty were arrested by the police, the rest dispersed like frightened sheep at the sight of the military, and in one hour the city settled down again to its usual quiet. There were in the city at the time two battalions of the 42nd Highlanders, who, as Protestants, could not but approve of the Governor's wish to see the Sabbath preserved from desecration, and, as Scotchmen, sympathised with Sir Patrick Stuart. If the order had been given to *them* to disperse the mob, it would have been executed with very little hesitation, and torrents of blood would probably have been shed. It may be regarded, therefore, as a fortunate circum-

stance that the Highlanders were confined to barracks during the riot, and that the guard consisted of a party of the island Fencibles. On the two following days the Carnival was carried on as usual; the persons arrested were brought before the sitting magistrates, and liberated on a promise of future good behaviour, after a detention of only twenty-four hours; and when the morning of Ash Wednesday arrived, the revellers and the rioters repaired, as was their wont, to the churches with aching heads and downcast looks, to ask of their priests absolution for the follies and the crimes of the three preceding days.*

This Carnival *émeute* sealed the fate of Sir Patrick Stuart as Governor of Malta. His motives in issuing the proclamation in the form in which he did were of course misrepresented; his conduct was described as harsh; his protestation was thought to be too pronounced. The political party which had for years embarrassed the administration of every successive Governor, aided now by an unscrupulous press, gave utterance to the sentiment that it was unjust that Malta should be governed by a military man. Malta, it was said, had not been conquered, but ceded. To put a military man at the head of the administration was to treat the Maltese as a conquered people. Government by a soldier was a "badge of conquest," an insult to a free people. The "patriotic" sentiment was immediately caught up, repeated in every possible form, and on every possible occasion, until it at last assumed the shape of a petition to Her Majesty, praying her to nominate as the next Governor of Malta a civilian, and at the same time to entrust the command of the garrison to a military man, who should take no part whatever in the civil administration of the island. Thus the civil and the military power being kept apart, harmony would be sure to prevail, and loyalty towards the British Crown

* An extract from Sir Patrick Stuart's despatch on the "Carnival Affair" will be found in the Appendix.

could not but be strengthened. The prayer was granted, and the native newspapers announced that a new era was about to dawn on Malta.

Sir Patrick Stuart had, however, incurred the displeasure of the "loyal people of Malta," not only because he was a soldier, but also because he was a *Protestant*. To send a civilian to Malta in his place would satisfy the wishes of the islanders, but to send a Roman Catholic civilian would fill the measure of public happiness even to overflowing, and would bind the hearts of the Maltese to the throne of Great Britain with bonds which time would never loosen. This wish to have a Roman Catholic Governor was represented by a portion of the press in England as a natural and a reasonable wish. The Imperial Government was anxious to satisfy, if possible, the desires of the Maltese in this respect; but to find a man uniting in his person the requisite qualifications was not easy. The difficulty was, however, overcome. A gentleman was found who united in his person the two essential qualifications of civilian and Roman Catholic; a gentleman, moreover, of experience and wisdom, who had sat in Parliament as member for the county Longford, and who had been one of the Lords of the Treasury. A more fortunate combination of circumstances had seldom before occurred in the history of Malta. In July, 1847, Sir Patrick Stuart resigned his command, and left Malta; Colonel Mildmay Fane, the senior military officer, assuming the government pending the appointment of the civil Governor. Towards the close of the year it was announced that the choice of Her Majesty had fallen upon the Right Honourable Richard More O'Ferrall.

R. More O'Ferrall, 1847.—No Governor of Malta ever entered on the duties of his office under more favourable circumstances than Mr. More O'Ferrall. The Roman Catholic priesthood were to a man friendly to him, because he professed the Roman Catholic religion, and in Malta, as in Ireland, the

man whom the priests delight to honour is sure to receive the plaudits of the multitude. Mr. O'Ferrall entered the city of Valletta amidst the acclamations of delighted crowds. His progress from the harbour to the palace was ever and anon interrupted by the greetings of an enthusiastic crowd, who welcomed him as though he had been the deliverer of the people of Malta from the most frightful tyranny. Mr. O'Ferrall bore all these demonstrations with as good a grace as possible. He was too sensible to imagine that he deserved them, for, in truth, he had done nothing as yet to render himself worthy of them; but he regarded them as the natural outbursts of a loving and affectionate people, to whose welfare he had resolved to devote all his energies. The people, however, had been taught by their priests, and by a certain class of politicians in Malta, to believe that Mr. O'Ferrall was to inaugurate in the island a new system of government, which should contain in it two elements, a priestly element and a liberal element. They had not the sense to see that these two elements never can be combined, but that, like an acid and an alkali, they invariably neutralise one another. Because Mr. O'Ferrall was a Roman Catholic the priests expected favour from him, and because he was a civilian,* the party which had for years thwarted the policy of the military Governors expected measures calculated to advance their views, whilst all agreed that a new era had dawned on the island; and the joy of the population not having expressed itself sufficiently on the landing of the new Governor, vented itself, when night came, in a magnificent illumination. What a sad contrast was presented to the impartial and amused spectator when, three years and a half after all this enthusiastic outburst, Mr. O'Ferrall left Malta for ever, as noiselessly as any plain Brown, Jones, or Robinson; and when the few admirers who still clung to him could not, either by promises or by threats, induce even the

* Lieut.-General Ellice was appointed to command the troops in Malta on the arrival of Mr. O'Ferrall.

porters who hang about the Marina Gate to give him a parting cheer! Was it that Mr. O'Ferrall had not, during those three years and a half, fitly represented the majesty of Great Britain in Malta? Was it that Mr. O'Ferrall had proved to be incompetent, unfaithful, and unjust? Not so. Mr. O'Ferrall was in every act of his administration just, impartial, fair; loyal to his Queen, and yet tenacious of the rights of her Maltese subjects. A strict and honest Roman Catholic, he nevertheless would not tolerate any interference on the part of the priests of the religion which he professed in the affairs of the Government. Liberal in his politics, he would not pander to the desires of a restless set of agitators who were silly enough to imagine that he would be content to become their tool. A more thoroughly independent and just Governor never ruled Malta than Mr. O'Ferrall; and because he asserted his independence, and ruled fairly, in accordance with the principles of British law and British candour, he was soon deserted by the *parti prêtre* on the one hand, and by the political agitators on the other. The few friends who remained to him were men of a kindred spirit to his own, who knew how to free themselves from the influence of these opposing forces, and to move in a direction which may be described as the resultant of these two forces, which combine respect for ancient institutions with a due regard for modern progress and modern requirements. Mr. O'Ferrall must have learned, during his short stay in Malta, that the *vox populi*, whatever else it may be, is not generally *vox Dei*.

One of the first acts of Mr. O'Ferrall gave great offence to some of the malcontents in Malta, who for years had studiously endeavoured to embarrass every successive Government. It was the appointment of a young English surgeon to the office of Comptroller of Charitable Institutions. Dr. Collins was the assistant-surgeon of H.M.S. *Oberon*, in which Mr. O'Ferrall travelled. Mr. O'Ferrall, during the voyage, learned the value of such a man as Dr. Collins, who, to a love of his profession,

added a sound judgment, enlarged views of human life, and a deep-rooted desire to devote himself to the good of his fellow-creatures; and shortly after he entered on his office as Governor of the island, Mr. O'Ferrall proposed to Dr. Collins that he should give up his position in the Royal Navy, and undertake the superintendence of the charitable institutions in Malta, which sadly needed reform, and which required exactly that kind of judicious management which Dr. Collins was so eminently qualified to bestow. The Governor's offer was accepted by Dr. Collins, who received, as comptroller, the moderate salary of £400 per annum. Every one who had the pleasure of being acquainted with Dr. Collins knows how admirably he discharged the duties of his office; but the mere fact of an Englishman being appointed to an office which certainly no native was qualified to fill, raised such a storm, that even the talent and the administrative ability of Mr. O'Ferrall could with difficulty quell it.*

Every symptom of dissatisfaction, however, appeared to be allayed as soon as the announcement was made that the Council of Government was shortly to be reformed. The local papers anticipated great changes from this step. Some believed that the changes would be beneficial, others that they would not materially affect the interests of the islanders. Speculation was rife as to the constitution of the new Council; until at last, in the month of June, 1849, public curiosity was gratified by the actual publication of Her Majesty's letters-patent on the subject of the reformed Council of Government. It was ordered in those letters-patent that the Council should henceforth consist of eighteen members, ten of whom were to be gentlemen holding offices under Government, and eight were to be un-

* Dr. Collins filled the office of Comptroller of Charitable Institutions in Malta for several years. He was afterwards appointed Auditor-General, in succession to Sir William Thornton; but did not live long to enjoy his new office, which, if he had lived, he would doubtless have filled with very great benefit to his country and to the island in which his lot had been cast.

official members elected by the people every five years. It was never contemplated by Her Majesty that ecclesiastics would be elected to serve as members of the Council; but as ecclesiastics were not expressly excluded by the terms of the letters-patent, three out of the eight unofficial members elected to serve in the first Council were priests. At the second election another was added; at the third another still; and so, in the course of a short time, five out of the eight popular members were Romish ecclesiastics. Of course, if matters had been allowed to remain in this state, the whole eight unofficial members of the Council would ere long have been priests, who would have had it in their power to dictate to, or at any rate to interfere with the freedom of, any Governor, civil or military. Fortunately circumstances arose which led in time to the absolute exclusion of all priests from the Malta Council of Government, and these circumstances arose during the governorship of Mr. More O'Ferrall.

One of the first duties of the new Council of Government was the revision of the Penal Code, which had been originally promulgated by the Grand Master Rohan, reformed by Sir Thomas Maitland, and re-reformed by the Commissioners, Mr. Austin and Mr. Lewis. The code was divided into two parts: the first, which treated of the general principles on which the laws of the island were to be administered; and the second, which treated of crimes and the punishment annexed to each. Amongst the crimes were mentioned, as a matter of course, those which related to offences against religion, such as open blasphemy, disturbing public worship, and offering a public insult to the members of any religious denomination. Articles 46 and 46A of the chapter headed "Offences against Religion," as amended by the Council, ran thus:—

"46. Whosoever shall disturb with violence, or with intent to profane with violence, the sacred functions or ceremonies of the Roman Catholic Apostolic Church *dominant in these islands,*

during the performance thereof, whether within or without the places destined for worship, shall be punished with imprisonment *from nine months to three years.*

"46A. Whosoever shall disturb with violence, or with intent to profane the functions or ceremonies of any other mode of worship *dissentient from that of the dominant Church* during the performance thereof, shall be punished with imprisonment from *seven months to two years.*"

As soon as these two articles were published, every friend of civil and religious liberty in Malta took the alarm. The evil of priestly dictation began to be felt. The articles contained a distinct assertion of the supremacy of the Church of Rome; an assertion that the Protestants resident in Malta, including members of the Church of England, were to be regarded and treated as dissenters; and a declaration that the amount of punishment dealt out to offenders against religion was to be different according as the offence was committed against the dominant or against other Churches. A protest against these assertions was at once drawn up, signed by the Protestant residents, and forwarded to Earl Grey, then Secretary of State for the Colonies.

On the 22nd of March, 1850, a debate took place in the Council on the two articles above quoted; a debate which fortunately has remained on record in the columns of the Malta journals, and which ought to be carefully studied just now, when so much is said about the principle of religious equality in Ireland. Nothing can show more clearly than that debate the spirit and the temper of the Roman Catholic priesthood everywhere and at all times. The Council having resolved itself into committee on the Criminal Code, Canon Amato rose to move that immediately after the heading of the chapter, "Offences against Religion," the following article be inserted: —"The Roman Catholic religion is the sole dominant; all other religions are either legally introduced, or protected, or

tolerated." He said that "the project of the code before them had taken for its basis the equality of all religions; it wanted to force on them equal rights for all religions, to convert Malta into another Geneva. ... According to it, the Mufti and the Rabbin should be protected equally with the Catholic minister. To this, or anything like this, he had the strongest objection. The promises which were made at the time of the incorporation of Malta with Great Britain established a real distinction; that is to say, one religion dominant, another protected, and all others tolerated. The punishment for offences against religion, in consequence, should bear a corresponding relation to these distinctions, *the gravity of the crime depending on the rank of the worship.* He had no intention, and could have none, of introducing a new principle of right.

* * * *

"He would now pass on to prove that the Roman Catholic religion had always been dominant. He began with the times of the Norman Count Roger, and said that there could be no doubt that it ruled in Malta as the dominant religion from that period up to the year 1798. On the arrival of the French, Buonaparte addressed the bishop and parish priests, and acknowledged them as the representatives of the religion of the people of these islands. In the convention it was stipulated that the religion of the people should continue to hold the same rank it held before; it was consequently dominant under the Republic. When Malta passed under Great Britain, the most solemn promises were made that the religion should continue the same. Those, and other subsequent assurances, had been given by all the representatives of Great Britain in Malta; they were made in the name and for the several sovereigns, George III., George IV., and William IV.

* * * *

"The Honourable Canon said he had alluded to all the immediate predecessors of the present Queen of England. Should

he not also mention her? Yes, he would. For she had given the Maltese more than a simple declaration; she had given them a *fact* in sending them a *Roman Catholic for their Governor.* What greater recognition of the position of their Church could they have than this?" *

Canon Amato was followed by another ecclesiastic, Monsignor Fiteni, who went very much further than the Canon. Amato had been content to demand supremacy for his own Church, whilst he recognised the necessity of tolerating and protecting other Churches. Monsignor Fiteni, however, said that "he felt it necessary to propose an amendment on that which had been moved by his learned friend, Canon Amato. He proposed that the word 'legally' should be suppressed. Instead of 'legally introduced,' he would suggest 'introduced' only. There is no law," he continued, "which can be quoted as authority to justify the exercise of any other worship than that of the Roman Catholic religion. The promises and assurances to which the Rev. Canon Amato had referred had been strictly maintained till the year 1840, when permission was given for the erection of a Protestant church. Up to that time the Anglican service was performed privately on the ground-floor of the palace. He hoped that the Council would abstain from giving *any legal recognition to that Church.*"

Opinions like these, breathing the spirit of the most determined ultramontanism, had never before been thus publicly expressed in Malta; and even the Roman Catholic lay members of the Council, bigoted and intolerant as some of them doubtless were, could hardly endorse them. Sir Vincent Casolani uttered a mild protest against the Canon's assertions; and Dr. Pullicino timidly ventured to question the policy of introducing the word "dominant" into the code as descriptive of the position of the Roman Catholic Church.

* *Malta Mail and United Service Journal.* Report of Session of the Council of Government, 22nd of March, 1850.

When the question was put from the chair, the amendment, that the words "dominant in Malta" be omitted, was negatived by eleven votes against five. The deliberate decision of the reformed Council therefore was, that whilst the Roman Catholic Church was to be regarded as dominant in Malta, the Church of the Queen and people of England should not be permitted to enjoy any legal *status*, but should be regarded as at most tolerated or protected by the local legislature. Mr. More O'Ferrall must have been heartily ashamed of being the President of such a Council.

Not many days elapsed before the debate in the Council drew forth from the British residents in Malta a letter addressed to Earl Grey, and an indignant protest from Dr. Tomlinson, the Bishop of Gibraltar. My narrative would hardly be complete without these two documents. I therefore quote them for the information of the reader. The letter to Earl Grey was dated the 30th of March, 1850, and was as follows:—

"My Lord,—We, the undersigned British subjects residing in the island of Malta, deem it a duty we owe to ourselves, to our families, and to our fellow-countrymen, to call your Lordship's attention to the proceedings of the Council of Government. In an important matter recently brought before it—namely, those articles in the proposed code of criminal laws which treat of offences against the respect due to religion—it has been decided by a majority of nearly three-fourths of the members of the Council that the Roman Catholic Apostolic Church is the *dominant Church* in these possessions; and in order that no doubt should exist of the meaning attached to that supremacy, it has been enacted that offences against the sacred functions or ceremonies of that Church shall be punished more severely than offences against any other form of worship dissimilar to or dissentient from that of the so-named dominant Church. If your Lordship will take the trouble to read the

debates on this subject, as reported in the *Malta Times* of the 19th and 26th of March, you will not fail, we think, to remark a tone of arrogance, bigotry, and intolerance which it would hardly be believed could exist in a British possession in the year one thousand eight hundred and fifty.

"It is our belief, my Lord, that if such intolerance and such bigotry be not at once arrested, it will entirely destroy that harmonious intercourse which has hitherto existed between the natives of Great Britain and of Malta, and will render a residence here repugnant to the feelings of all persons who are not of the Roman Catholic faith.

"We therefore pray that your Lordship will advise Her Majesty to refuse her royal sanction to Articles 46 and 46A of the proposed code, and cause to be expunged from any other articles of the code the word DOMINANT as applied to the Roman Catholic Apostolic Church."

The protest of the Bishop of Gibraltar was addressed to Mr. More O'Ferrall, and was as follows :—

"To his Excellency the Right Honourable Richard More O'Ferrall, Governor of Malta, &c.

"PROTEST.—We, the undersigned, George, by Divine permission Bishop of Gibraltar, being by virtue of our office and by the authority of Her Majesty's letters-patent invested with the power of exercising episcopal jurisdiction, according to the ecclesiastical laws of England, in all places belonging to the Church of England within the island of Malta, and being ordinarily resident within the said island, have considered it to be our duty to examine those articles of the proposed code of criminal laws for the said island which are entitled, 'Concerning Offences against the respect due to Religion,' as amended by the Council of Government; and having found that it is therein proposed to make the Church of Rome the dominant

Church in Malta, to declare it to be the exclusively Catholic Church, to class the Church of England and other religious bodies of Her Majesty's subjects as dissentients from the Church of Rome as it at present exists in the said island, and to enact heavier penalties for offences against the Roman Catholic worship than for offences against others; therefore we, the Bishop aforesaid, do hereby protest in the strongest manner against the adoption of the said articles for the following reasons:—

"1. Because, whatever may be the privileges granted to the Maltese, the supremacy of the English Crown carries with it of necessity the supremacy of the religion of the Queen and people of England, and establishes it by the law of the land in every colony and dependency of the empire, Malta included.

"2. Because this proceeding of the majority of the Council in attempting to make the Church of Rome dominant in Malta, and to declare the religion of the said Church to be exclusively the Catholic religion, is an attack upon the supremacy of the Crown and the fundamental laws of the empire, and an invasion of the rights and privileges of the Catholic and Apostolic Church of England.

"3. Because the attempt to class the Church of England and other bodies of Her Majesty's subjects together as being merely dissenters or dissentient from the Church of Rome as it at present exists in Malta, is an insult to the religion of the Queen and people of England.

"4. Because the enactment of greater penalties for offences against the Roman Catholic worship than for offences against the worship of other Christian Churches is a violation of the principle of equal protection for all classes of Her Majesty's subjects, and of the rights and liberties of Englishmen.

"5. Because neither the clergy nor the people of the Church of England in Malta have given the least occasion for any such proceedings, they having been careful on all occasions to avoid

giving offence to their Maltese fellow-subjects in all things connected with their religion.

"Given at Gibraltar Palace, in the city of Valletta, this twentieth day of March, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and fifty.

"G. GIBRALTAR."

The result of the debate and of the remonstrances to which it gave rise was, that the Queen not only refused to sanction the measure proposed by Canon Amato and his party, but, during the administration of Sir William Reid, issued new letters-patent, by which all ecclesiastics were rendered ineligible to a seat in the Council, and thus were effectually prevented from making the law the instrument of priestly tyranny.

In less than one year after this attempt was made by the priests of Malta to ride rough-shod over their too-indulgent British fellow-subjects, Mr. O'Ferrall resigned his office and returned to England, sadder, though perhaps wiser, than he left it.* The experiment of appointing a Roman Catholic civilian to govern Malta had signally failed. The "patriots" were more clamorous than ever, and the priests had shown plainly that nothing but the most absolute dominion over every individual in Malta, the Governor included, would satisfy them. Concession to popular clamour and to priestly dictation was

* The *Malta Observer* of the 31st of October, 1864, in an article on Sir G. Le Marchant's administration, said:—"It may not be superfluous to remind the public of Malta that when, in 1847, Her Majesty appointed the Right Hon. More O'Ferrall civil Governor of Malta, and the Maltese had thus obtained the acme of their desires in the person of a co-religionist, they were so little grateful for what is now spoken of as 'the greatest boon,' and so little appreciated the Honourable Roman Catholic gentleman, that he quitted Malta in great measure from disgust at seeing thirty-four libels against himself lying on his table; and when a friend, to whom he showed them, told him they were only the work of vagabonds, his truly English and lofty answer was, 'Where then are the honourable men who will stand up to contradict and stigmatise them?'"

found to be the worst possible policy. Statesmen at home began to see the necessity of retracing their steps, and governing Malta without any regard to the violent outcries of demagogues or priests, but in such a manner as to contribute to the general welfare of the inhabitants. Mr. O'Ferrall's successor was a military man; but as it was deemed imprudent to return suddenly to the old form of government, he was appointed over the civil administration, and not permitted to take any part in the military affairs of the island, another military man being appointed to command the garrison.

Sir William Reid, 1851.—The new Governor, Sir William Reid, had already distinguished himself both as Governor of Bermuda and as the discoverer of the Circular Theory of Storms. In the scientific world he was widely known; in private life he had gained the esteem of all who had the privilege of knowing him; and as Governor of Bermuda he had earned the reputation of being "firm and impartial." On his arrival in Malta he devoted himself to the reform of the primary schools and of the University; he tried to encourage a taste for literature and science; he introduced several new agricultural implements; and did his very best to improve the native system of farming. His proceedings in the Council of Government were marked by tact, firmness, and good temper; and his administration was, on the whole, wise and beneficial. But Sir William Reid, full of anxiety as he was to improve the social and moral condition of the Maltese people, was not prepared to encounter the difficulties that beset him on all sides. The chief of these difficulties arose from the intense ignorance of the native population, and the still more intense bigotry of the priesthood. It is hardly credible that after nearly seventy years of British rule in Malta, education should be at so low an ebb. There is an institution, to which I have already alluded, called the Malta Government University, the standard of education in which is not so high as in an English

middle-class school. Subordinate to the University is a preparatory school, called the Lyceum. Besides these, there are primary and secondary schools supported by the local Government. In the University are some really able and intelligent men amongst the professors, but their stipends are so miserably small, and the standard at which their pupils aim so miserably low, that they have little encouragement to exert themselves in the promotion of a love for science and literature. The truth is that the priests systematically discourage education. Many of the native merchants and gentlemen holding Government appointments would, if they could, send their sons to private schools where they would receive a good English education, but in every case where this has been attempted the priests have interfered, and have proved powerful enough to insure obedience. The plans of the local Government for the education of the people have always been thwarted by the priests. "A government," says Aristotle, "ruling for the benefit of all, is of its very nature anxious for the education of all, not only because intelligence is in itself a good and the condition of good, but even in order that its subjects may be able to appreciate the benefit of which it is itself the source." That the people of Malta, however, should appreciate the benefits of which British government is the source, is not agreeable to the ideas of the priests of Malta. The study of the English language, for instance, which is recommended and encouraged in the Government schools of Malta, would necessarily be followed by the study of English books, the acquisition of English ideas, and, in time, the emancipation of the popular mind from all bondage, intellectual and spiritual. The power of the priests would then decay and die. In self-defence, therefore, they oppose education. What, after British influence has exerted itself in Malta since the year 1800, is the present condition of the people in regard to education? How many of the natives of Malta can speak the English language with

fluency? How many know anything of the history of the great empire into which they have been absorbed? How many can give a rational account of the British constitution? Certainly not one out of a hundred. Perhaps it will be said that the standard set up in the foregoing questions is too high. To come lower down then, how many of the natives of Malta can read their own or any other language? Very few indeed, and still fewer can write. Let the traveller in Malta verify this fact for himself. Let him leave the city of Valletta and its immediate neighbourhood, and visit the villages of Malta or the neighbouring island of Gozo, and he will find the people as uncultivated as the Arabs of the desert, and not unlike the same Arabs in their mode of life. It is not much to be wondered at that amidst such a population, and in the face of the most determined opposition on the part of the clergy, Sir William Reid was not able to do much for the promotion of education, and for the improvement of the social condition of the people. One great difficulty in the way of education in Malta, which would continue to be a difficulty even if priests and people were all sincerely desirous for improvement, is the language. The language of the common people is Arabic, corrupted with an infusion of Italian words, whilst the language of the Government schools is *Italian.* Maltese boys and girls, accustomed to an Arabic *patois* from their earliest infancy, are obliged to learn a foreign language before they can begin to acquire any information, and by the time they have succeeded in learning a little of the language they have to leave school in search of a livelihood. In due time they become men and women; they know nothing of English, and very little of Italian; their own language is only printed occasionally as a matter of curiosity; and so the acquisition of knowledge becomes next to impossible.

One of the acts of Sir William Reid's Government was the widening of the gate called Porta Reale. This was accom-

plished under circumstances of considerable difficulty. The officer in command of the Royal Engineers, Col. F. R. Thompson, superintended the work, and brought it to a successful issue. The foundation-stone of the new structure was laid on the 28th of June, 1853, by the Governor, in the presence of the principal civil, naval, and military officers then resident in Malta. Within the foundation-stone was laid a scroll, on which were engrossed the names of the officers who took part in the ceremony, and also some remarkable statistics of Malta and Gozo. A copy of the contents of this scroll was by permission of the Governor published in the *Malta Mail*, and from it we learn that at the time referred to, in the year 1853, the population of Malta and Gozo, exclusive of the garrison, amounted to one hundred and twenty-three thousand four hundred and ninety-six souls. Of these forty thousand two hundred were persons having no fixed occupation, one thousand and forty were priests, and one hundred and twenty-five nuns. There were six educational establishments under ecclesiastical control, eighteen supported by Government, and one hundred and fifty-six private schools. There were also three hundred and thirty-four chapels and oratories, fifteen convents, and five nunneries. The Protestant ecclesiastical establishment consisted of one church (St. Paul's), built by Queen Adelaide, two military chapels, and one chapel in connection with the Free Church of Scotland. The revenue of the island arising from customs, rents of land, houses, and other property then amounted to £227,000 per annum.

During Sir W. Reid's reign in Malta the Crimean war broke out. In the spring of 1854 there were quartered at Malta three regiments of Guards, a battalion of the Rifle Brigade, and fourteen regiments of the line, besides a detachment of the Royal Engineers. All these were provided with comfortable accommodation, and forwarded as opportunity occurred to the seat of war; and it is very much to the credit of Sir W. Reid

that at this time, and throughout the whole course of the war, he cordially co-operated with Sir James Ferguson, the Commander-in-Chief of the troops. No feeling of petty jealousy ever appears to have manifested itself. A military man of rank and experience, he was content to discharge his duty as a civil Governor, and to aid another military man in discharging important military duties at a critical and eventful time.

After the termination of the Crimean war, Sir W. Reid continued for three years to govern Malta, during which time Sir John Pennefather commanded the garrison. Failing health compelled Sir W. Reid to resign his office in the spring of 1858; and he left Malta, carrying with him the respect, amounting almost to affection, of every one who had the pleasure of his acquaintance, or the honour of being officially connected with him. Sir W. Reid, by his amiable temper, his benevolent projects, and his conciliatory manner, did much during his residence in Malta to allay the discontent that had been manifested by the popular agitators a few years before; but in spite of every effort on his part, he was able to do very little towards improving the social condition of the people, and introducing amongst them a better system of education.

His successor was a military man, who united in his own person the two offices of civil Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the troops, and who did more for Malta than any of its rulers had done since the British occupation. So full of interest and so beneficial to the people of Malta was the administration of Sir John Gaspard Le Marchant that I shall devote to it the whole of the next chapter.

CHAPTER XV.

MALTA UNDER BRITISH RULE.—ADMINISTRATION OF SIR JOHN GASPARD LE MARCHANT. 1858—1864.

Sir J. G. Le Marchant, 1858.—The experiment had been tried of giving the Maltese a Roman Catholic civilian as Governor. It had signally failed. This concession, it was said, would remove from the Maltese every cause of discontent, would render them intensely loyal, and would be, after all, only an act of justice. The result showed that the concession did not produce the anticipated effects. The bulk of the population in Malta, indeed, cared very little who was Governor; but the restless spirits who had traded on agitation for years became more restless than ever. Like spoiled children, after every wish had been gratified, and even their little whims and caprices had been indulged, they still continued to stamp, and to cry, and to refuse to be comforted; but what they wanted neither they nor any one else could divine. Sir William Reid pursued the even tenor of his way, without paying much heed to their childish exhibitions of wrath and ill-humour. Then the Crimean war, which gave thousands of the natives of Malta an opportunity of making money, and enriched many hundreds of them, so completely engrossed their attention, that no time was left for peevishness, and for the indulgence of a desire for some new toy to play with. The "patriots" found their occupation gone for the time, and turned, like the rest of their countrymen, to the mercantile speculation which the war opened up. When Sir Gaspard Le Marchant commenced his reign in Malta, these unhappy agitators recommenced their lamentations..

Sir Gaspard was every inch a soldier—honest, straightforward, and candid. He was anxious to promote in every way the good of the Maltese people, and although a soldier, he possessed all the attributes of a good civil Governor. With a certain bluntness of manner and an air of authority, he was thoroughly kind, considerate, and gentle; his bluntness of manner never degenerating into rudeness, and his authoritative mien never expressing itself in any tyrannical act or word. He devoted himself thoroughly, from the very beginning, to his work, visiting in person every institution, without pomp or parade, examining into the working of every public department, and making himself personally acquainted with the details of every measure discussed in the Council of Government. In six months Sir Gaspard had commenced a wholesome reform, which was gradually extended to every part of the machinery necessary for the government of the islands under his command; he had inaugurated public works of immense importance, he had planned the establishment of useful institutions, he had expressed his determination to improve the schools and the University; and for these things he was attacked in a series of libels, which were published week after week in some of the local newspapers, which were not ashamed thus to lend themselves to excite hatred against one whom they ought to have supported in carrying out his plans for the public good. Sir Gaspard turned a deaf ear to these libels, and carried out his plans with the sanction of the Imperial Government, and with the approbation of all who really had the interests of the Maltese at heart. Unfortunately, many of these libels being read by English visitors to Malta, were believed, because the readers of them had no means of ascertaining their falsehood, and because they naturally supposed that where there was so much smoke there must be some fire. Those, however, who, like the author of this narrative, lived in Malta all through the administration of Sir Gaspard, and who watched with impartial

eye the wonderful improvements which were made year by year, know how senseless, how unjust, how utterly false those libels were.

The Governor was actually accused of endeavouring to influence by bribes all whose good opinion he was anxious to obtain; of bringing undue pressure to bear on the Council, so as to have a majority in favour of any measure proposed by himself; of extravagance in regard to the finances of the island; and of neglecting both the social improvement of the people and the promotion of public works. How baseless these accusations were, the following facts will show. The pages of the *Malta Government Gazette* reveal the fact that, during the six years which Sir Gaspard passed as Governor of Malta, the general revenue of the island was increased by no less a sum than £27,000 per annum. The census taken in 1863 shows that, between the years 1851 and 1861, there had been an increase of population amounting to more than ten thousand souls. The exports and imports had also risen considerably, showing an improvement in the commerce of the island; the exports in 1864 being £2,556,130, and the imports £3,208,900. The most wonderful improvements, too, were effected in the sanatory condition of Valletta. An English gentleman who had several times visited Malta in search of health, paid one of his visits to it in the autumn of 1864. Under the signature "A Manchester Man," he thus wrote to the *Malta Observer* on the 8th of September of that year:—

"On landing from the *Ellora*, and passing along the streets of Valletta, I was struck with their absolute cleanliness and almost absence of unpleasant smells from the sewers, so different from what it was only four years back; and I may add, that in my subsequent perambulations all over Valletta the same difference presented itself at every step. * * * So the Maltese are dissatisfied, are they? Did you ever know them otherwise? I have known them under the governorship of many Governors,

and have never heard any other cry. What will satisfy them? * * * The island not prosperous! Then what mean those lowing oxen, those bleating sheep, that well-stocked market? What mean those nicely-baked dishes instead of rye bread? What mean those numerous jaunting-cars? Who supports them? Do the horses live on wind, and the drivers on salt water? What mean those streets of new houses springing up like mushrooms? What means that unparalleled increase in the savings-banks investments? Strange things these for a place that is not prosperous! But enough."

One of the first things that attracts the notice of the resident in Malta is the want of a sufficient supply of water. The geological formation of the island is not unfavourable to the collection of a quantity of water sufficient to supply the wants of the whole population. Mr. Bateman,* the eminent engineer, says, in his Report to the Duke of Buckingham, under date May 11th, 1867: "I am perfectly satisfied that an abundant supply of good fresh water can be obtained, by sinking one or more large shafts or wells to about the level of the sea, in any convenient position near the centre of the island, and by raising the water thus found, by steam power, to the requisite elevation." Sir Gaspard Le Marchant, several years before this Report was made, directed his attention to the water supply of Malta. Aqueducts were repaired and enlarged by his orders, nine new tanks were constructed, besides several wells and smaller cisterns. Several springs likewise were re-opened, and others made available; so that the inhabitants of Malta owed to Sir Gaspard Le Marchant the thanks which, in every Oriental country, the public owe to the man who by any means secures the enjoyment of what is not a mere luxury, but a necessary of life of the very first importance—pure water, and plenty of it.

Another matter to which the Governor turned his attention

* For Mr. Bateman's Report see Appendix.

was the planting of fruit trees and other trees calculated to afford shelter from the rays of the sun during hot weather. The space in front of the Cathedral of St. John was thus planted with trees, which were not only extremely ornamental, but which afforded in summer relief to the eye and shelter from the intense heat. The English reader will scarcely credit the fact that, out of pure opposition to the Governor, and influenced apparently by no other motive than spite, a party was actually found to petition the Imperial Government for the removal of these trees, which every one but the party in question regarded as a great boon in an island exposed for eight months in the year to the burning rays of an almost tropical sun. The objections to the trees were, that they diminished the amount of light which found its way into the shops on St. John's Square; that the trees, owing to the darkness they cause, favour improper meetings at night, that offend against public morality; and that in rainy weather the passage between the trees was rendered difficult, on account of the quantity of mud that accumulated there. Any one who has lived in Malta knows full well that the exclusion of the sun's rays in such a climate could not be otherwise than a benefit, and that rainy weather in Malta is so rare, that very little inconvenience could be caused by it. The gravest objection against the existence of the trees on St. John's Square is the second, which alleges that immorality was encouraged by the darkness which they occasioned; and in order to remove this objection, Sir Gaspard Le Marchant actually suggested to the priests of St. John's Cathedral that they should place a few lamps in front of their cathedral; but they refused to pay any attention to the suggestion, and without the sanction of the clergy connected with the cathedral, even the Governor could not have ordered the lamps to be placed in the square.

Sir G. Le Marchant also devoted his attention to the state of the roads. Sir Henry Bouverie had greatly improved the roads all over the island; but Sir Gaspard found that there was

room for improvement, and in the course of five years he reconstructed twenty-three roads, he made fourteen new roads, and widened more than twenty. In such an island as Malta, the administration of the public charities is a matter of the utmost importance. Dr. Collins had, during the administration of Sir William Reid, done much towards the improvement of the charitable institutions of Malta. Sir G. Le Marchant did more. The lunatic asylum in the neighbourhood of Città Vecchia was completed and opened. Every one who has visited that institution knows how admirable the arrangements are for the comfort, and, so far as is possible, for the recovery, of the inmates. Dr. Sutherland and Mr. Douglas Galton, the two greatest authorities of modern times on sanatory matters, have written and spoken in the highest terms of this asylum.

In the neighbourhood of Valletta is an institution called the Ospizio, or Poorhouse. It contains about seven hundred inmates, who are made as comfortable as it is possible to make them under the circumstances. Their food was made a subject of inquiry by Sir Gaspard, and several beneficial changes were introduced into the internal working of the establishment. The same may be said of the Hospital of Incurables, the Orphan Asylum, and the Central Hospital. But not content with ministering to the wants of the sick and the aged, Sir Gaspard took into consideration the wants of the healthy and the vigorous, who needed to be daily supplied with good and wholesome food. The old market of Valletta was a disgrace to any civilised town. A new market, large, clean, and comfortable, was erected. Rules for the proper management of the market were made and strictly enforced. Even the bitterest enemies of Sir Gaspard were obliged to confess that the new market was a real benefit to the town. Yet there were not wanting those, as I can personally testify, who asserted that Sir Gaspard had no higher motive in view than self-exaltation, and who accused him of the most contemptible egotism, because an inscription was

placed over the market, which stated that it was erected during the period of his administration.

In addition to all the improvements above mentioned, we may reckon the improvement of the sanatory condition of the city, to which I have already alluded, the erection of a public *café* on the square opposite the Garrison Library, the concentration of all the public offices within the Palace walls, the establishment of telegraphic communication between the Palace and the principal forts, the reorganisation of the prison system, the revision of the rents of public edifices, the reform of the courts of law, and last, though not least, the repairs and embellishment of the Palace, the former residence of the Grand Masters. One act, the removal of the statue of Manoel de Vilhena from its original position to the Palace in Valletta, was, to say the least, ill-judged; but we can well afford to pardon this trifling act to a man who has deserved so well of his country, and who in the course of six years did more for the material, moral, and intellectual prosperity of the people of Malta than was done by the rulers who preceded him during the long period of sixty years.

The embellishment of the Palace cost £1,100, and the expenditure of this sum brought upon him the most unmeasured reproaches from a portion of the Malta press. The old Armoury of the Knights of St. John had been long neglected, and its contents thrown aside like useless lumber. Sir Gaspard set himself to work to recover these valuable relics of a bygone age—relics interwoven with the heroic memories of the island, and interesting to all students of mediæval history. Under his personal direction they were duly restored, classified, and arranged to the best advantage in one of the finest halls of the Palace, of which they now form one of the chief attractions. The long corridors of this magnificent building have been repaved with coloured marbles in the beautiful antique style by Mr. Darmanin, a native artist, assisted by native workmen.

When it is remembered that this palace, formerly the residence of the Grand Master of the most renowned Order in the world, is really one of the most beautiful buildings of its kind internally, we can hardly regret that the sum of £1,100 should have been spent on its embellishment. The critics who objected to the expenditure of this sum in this way may well be called captious.

It must not be forgotten by the reader that to carry out improvements in an island like Malta, where the people are extremely bigoted and steeped in the grossest ignorance, is a task of almost incredible difficulty. One of the most striking proofs of the backward condition of the people is the fact that nearly all who possess money are content to keep it idle in their own houses, rather than invest it in commercial or other speculations, if the least risk is to be encountered. They must see the money, and be able from time to time to count it, or they cannot believe themselves to be the possessors of it. Some few capitalists, more enlightened than the rest, have actually ventured to confide their money to the savings-bank, where they receive £2 per cent. interest on sums under £100, no interest being paid on deposits above this sum. There are, besides the savings-bank, two banks of deposit in Valletta, where merchants and tradesmen are allowed to keep their money for security, not receiving any interest upon it; but, on the contrary, paying to the bank £5 per annum for the trouble of guarding the cash. In 1864 there were about £80,000 lodged in the savings-bank of Malta without interest, and about £350,000 in the two banks of deposit; and no amount of eloquence could persuade the owners of these sums to invest them in any commercial enterprise, or even in the British Consolidated Fund.

In writing of the administration of Sir Gaspard Le Marchant, we must not omit to mention the greatest of all the works which he carried out in Malta—the deepening and extension of the

Great Harbour. Had he done nothing but this during the six years that he ruled over Malta, he would have deserved the highest commendation from every Englishman, and would have earned the deepest gratitude of every Maltese. How great the benefits are which he has conferred upon Malta by this work can only be understood by those who have resided on the island, and who know the dangers that the ships are exposed to, even in the harbour, during the prevalence of stormy weather. The extension of the Great Harbour, planned and carried out by Sir Gaspard, was suggested by the existence in Malta of a naval dock for the repair of Her Majesty's ships. The formation of a dock at Malta was projected as far back as the year 1815; but the project was not actually carried into execution till 1841, when the foundation of the work was laid, under the superintendence of Rear-Admiral Sir John Lewis. Seven years later, on the 5th of September, 1848, the *Antelope* steamer was received into the dock for repair. This was the first time that a vessel of war was repaired and refitted for sea service in Malta. The Rear-Admiral Superintendent of the Dockyard at that time was Rear-Admiral Edward Harvey.

The plan and working drawings for this dock were furnished by Mr. Scamp, Admiralty Engineer; and the works were carried on until their completion by Mr. Walter Elliot. The estimated cost of the dock was £45,000; the actual cost, however, was upwards of £60,000. The expenditure of this immense sum was of course of great benefit to the Maltese; and the presence of the large number of English engineers and artificers necessary to carry on the work was of great service to the native workmen, who learned from them much that was calculated to make them more expert than they had ever been before at their several trades. In 1857 the dock was enlarged, as it had not been found sufficiently capacious to admit large steam-vessels. The new works were solemnly inaugurated by Admiral Lord Lyons, who on the 1st of June (the anniversary of the victory

gained over the French by Lord Howe in 1790) made a speech worthy of the day and of the occasion—a speech which those who had the pleasure of hearing it will not soon forget.

The existence of this dock made it important that the naval authorities at Malta should acquire possession of stores and other property in the immediate neighbourhood of the dock. A large sum of money was therefore given for property which belonged to the Roman Catholic Bishop, Casolani, a son of Sir Vincent Casolani, formerly Collector of Land Revenue. This property having been purchased, and having passed into the hands of the local Government, nothing remained but to extend and deepen that part of the Great Harbour called the Marsa; so that in the severest weather, and during the prevalence of the heaviest gales, the largest ships might lie there at anchor in perfect safety. Sir Gaspard accomplished with undaunted perseverance this truly great undertaking; and has left in the harbour works at Malta a monument which will last as long as the island lasts, and which will remind generations to come of his ability, his judgment, and his zeal in the service of his country.

This is what Sir Gaspard Le Marchant did in his capacity of civil Governor of Malta; but he was at the same time Commander-in-Chief of the garrison; and all who impartially watched his public acts in this capacity can testify to his eminent services.

From parliamentary and other documents, it appears that when Sir Gaspard went to Malta he found the fortifications so utterly inefficient that he declined to undertake any responsibility in reference to them, except under protest. It appears to be an undoubted fact that, notwithstanding the immense sums of money spent on the fortifications by several successive Governors, Malta was considered to be so utterly defenceless in 1858 that almost any enemy could have taken it from us without any difficulty. There was scarcely a gun on the bastions fit for service. The ammunition was placed so far away from

the batteries as to be comparatively useless, and was in such an exposed position that the enemy could at any moment have either seized or exploded it. The shot piled up near the guns was not suited to the calibre of the guns, and the gun-carriages and platforms were so completely out of order that the firing of a few rounds would have rendered them completely useless.

The fearless and straightforward report which Sir Gaspard forwarded to the Commander-in-Chief at home led to the formation of the Mediterranean Defence Committee, and to the measures which were carried out by the committee. Now, thanks to his exertions, Malta has been raised to the condition of the strongest fortress in the world; and this has been effected so ably that ammunition and all other requisites are always just where they would be required in case of an attack on the island, and fire could be opened from every point of the batteries at a moment's notice. The infantry have been trained to do duty as artillerymen, and the garrison so organised and practised that, like the crew of a ship on the beat to "quarters," every man would know, in case of an alarm, how to reach his post and to do his proper work, not by day only, but even on the darkest night. The fortifications extend at least twenty-five miles, and along every part of this immense distance regularity and forethought are visible to the most casual observer. The arrangements are such that by telegraphic signals from the Palace every gun could be fired in a few minutes, and in the magazines, which are distributed throughout the fortifications, sufficient ammunition for every gun will be found ready to hand. But this is not all. The electric telegraph now connects all the forts and outposts with the headquarters at the Palace, and thus in case of war the Governor has the supreme control over every military operation throughout the island. Improvements never thought of by former Governors were carried out by Sir Gaspard Le Marchant during the six years of his administration, and carried out thoroughly and

effectually. Besides effecting the improvements above referred to, Sir Gaspard commenced and completed the Pembroke Barracks, so called after the late Lord Herbert. They are situated at George's Bay, and are capable of accommodating twelve hundred men. Detachments from Valletta are sent out there, not only for sanatory reasons, but for instruction in musketry, for which the site affords great facilities. The barracks are so healthy and so well adapted to the purpose for which they were destined, that the Sanatory Commissioners sent out by the War Office reported them superior in this respect to all the other barracks on the island; and whilst the erection of ordinary barracks is £100 per man, the estimates for these did not exceed £20 per man.

In the military hospitals at Valletta, Sir Gaspard carried out great reforms; and the result of his measures was at once seen in the decrease of 26·97 per cent. on the admissions into the hospitals during the year 1864, as compared with the four previous years. The immense block of buildings at the entrance of Città Vecchia, which in the time of the knights was used as the residence of the Inquisitor-General, and beneath which were the dungeons in which the poor victims of the Inquisition were tortured, was converted by Sir Gaspard into a sanatorium, which he personally superintended, manifesting always a deep interest in the comforts of its inmates. The wives and children of non-commissioned officers and soldiers had a hospital provided for them at Floriana; and at the time that Sir Gaspard resigned his command, he had planned and actually commenced the construction of special blocks of building for the occupation of the wives and families of the married soldiers.

These are facts which any one who visits Malta may verify for himself, and the consideration of these facts will serve to set in its true light the conduct of those unscrupulous journalists and of those so-called "patriots" who, for six long years,

offered a factious and unmeaning opposition to the Government of Sir Gaspard Le Marchant.

The author of a pamphlet entitled "English Governors and Foreign Grumblers, or Malta in 1864," says very truly:— "How far it would be judicious to place a fortress so important for military purposes as Malta on the independent footing of our great Transatlantic colonies, or to suffer the Maltese to legislate for themselves, and for us too, by disposing of the salaries and appointments of English officials, will, I think, hardly admit of debate in the British Parliament. It does not seem probable, at least, that in this small military *pied-à-terre*, of which the Duke of Wellington justly remarked that 'one might as well give a constitution to a man-of-war,' the Imperial Government will give scope for a recurrence of the Corfiote parliamentary scandals or complications. On the other hand, the Maltese may assuredly rest content with allowing English ministers and Governors to legislate for them so long as their affairs are not less ably handled, and their welfare not less efficiently provided for, than they have been by Sir Gaspard Le Marchant."

It may perhaps appear strange to the reader that a public benefactor like Sir Gaspard should not have been a popular Governor; but all who have had any experience of colonial life know that the talent possessed by Sir Gaspard, although calculated to render him useful, was not calculated to render him popular. He possessed great administrative abilities, a clear judgment, indomitable energy, manliness, honesty, and a sincere desire to render strict justice to all with whom he was officially connected; but he did not possess that bland manner which captivates whilst it charms; he never could bring himself to utter fulsome compliments of which he did not believe one word; he never could be prevailed upon to make splendid promises which he was conscious he never intended to keep. He never, in short, sought popularity, and he never used any

unworthy means to obtain it. He simply did what he knew and believed to be his duty, and in doing his duty he sought his reward, the reward of a good conscience. If Sir Gaspard had stooped to court the favour of certain gentlemen connected with the press of Malta; if he had shown a few marked civilities to some of the leaders of the "patriotic" party; above all, if he had bestowed a few pensions or sinecure public offices on some of the hungry place-hunters who for ever hang about the precincts of the Palace, he would have left Malta a "popular" Governor. But because he was too honest to secure the favour of an unprincipled clique by these means, personal attacks were made on him for years in the columns of the local newspapers, and he left Malta without any of those marks of respect which are usually bestowed on popular favourites. He left behind him, however, permanent memorials of his administration, in the shape of great public works — the new commercial port, the new market, the enlarged dock, the improved charitable institutions, model lodging-houses, a new extramural cemetery, and many other works of immense importance, besides rendering the fortress of Valletta what it never was before—defensible by the garrison.

With the members of his own profession Sir Gaspard was undoubtedly popular; by them his soldier-like frankness was appreciated, and his honourable conduct in the trying circumstances in which he was placed was admired.

On the 29th of October, 1864, a farewell dinner was given to Sir Gaspard by the officers of the garrison, at which Major-General Ridley, the next senior officer, presided. On that occasion General Ridley referred to the improved state of the hospitals, the barracks at Pembroke Camp, and the various sanatory measures which Sir Gaspard had adopted to promote the health and comfort of the troops. "And when we look," *

* *Malta Observer*, October 31, 1864.

he continued, "at the care and attention bestowed on the vast fortifications surrounding this island, where every gun is mounted, and where everything is so placed that in the shortest time the whole works can be manned to resist an attack, I think we may say that the tribute of respect which we offer him to-night is not unjustly bestowed, and that he has gained for himself the affection and esteem of all who have served under him." We need not, of course, attach too much importance to the complimentary language used on the occasion of a farewell dinner; and yet all who are acquainted with the facts will testify that General Ridley, on the occasion above mentioned, did no more than simple justice to Sir Gaspard, and expressed only the candid opinion of every military man who had served under Sir Gaspard's command.

I cannot conclude this chapter on the administration of Sir Gaspard Le Marchant more appropriately than by the following quotation from an article published in the *Reader* in the month of August, 1864, a short time before Sir Gaspard retired from the governorship of Malta:—

"The first thing to be done in a colonial agitation on any subject is to abuse the Governor. It is a safe and easy process, can do no harm, and may possibly do good to the abusers. If he be confirmed in his post, things are no worse than they were; if he be removed, surely some small crumbs of patronage may fall to the share of those who have been instrumental in clearing the way for his grateful successor. Thus the first thing to be done by unemployed colonial talent is to abuse the Governor, to bespatter him with mud, and then call the world to come and see how dirty he is; a hard case for the said Governor, who is obliged to maintain a dignified and unaltered mien, happen what may.

"For this policy, however, to be perfectly successful, certain requirements are necessary which are absent in the case of Malta. Amongst these, one of the most important is, perhaps,

a distance so great from the centres of thought and action as to render the intrusion of unbiassed and independent observers improbable, and the time between the transmission of a statement and its refutation or confirmation so extended as to permit it to take root and bear some fruit, good or evil as the case may be. Though a little out of the beaten track, Malta is still liable to occasional visitations from that pestilent meddler in other people's affairs—the British tourist. And certain of that ubiquitous race have been so startled at hearing men who were at the least supposed to possess the common attributes of English gentlemen designated as spoilers, intriguers, misappliers of other people's money, abolishers of popular liberty, insulters of religion and many other dreadful things besides, as to think it worth their while to inquire how such accusations were warranted by facts.

"From a careful study of the papers bearing on the subject, aided by some small observations of our own, made during more than one visit to the island, we are obliged to come to the conclusion that the opponents of the present Government have by no means proved their case, and that, though of course there may be some minor points of internal policy open to question, there can be no doubt about the vast improvement in all essentials made during the last ten years. On this point all external evidence, as far as we have been able to collect it, is unanimous. Our space, however, will not permit us to go *seriatim* into each individual accusation and its refutation. There are, however, one or two points worth touching upon, more particularly one monster grievance of the Maltese, for which it happens that the present Governor, Sir Gaspard Le Marchant, is in no way responsible.

"The pith of it may be expressed in a few words: the priests of Malta are prevented from governing the island of Malta. This desire of the priests for domination, though a little startling at first, Malta being a fortress and nothing else, will be found, on examination, not to be so very unreasonable from a clerical

point of view. At a rough calculation, the island of Malta is divided between three classes of possessors. The Imperial Government, succeeding to the knights, holds one third; certain Maltese hold another; and the third (acquired as they best know how) is in the hands of the priests. So that, on the grounds of being possessors of one-third of the entire soil, they certainly seem to have some claim to a share in the government of an island in the well-doing of which they are so deeply interested. Nor is this mere possession of territory their only claim to power. The population of Malta is, from a Roman Catholic point of view, one of the most religious, devout, and devoted to the Roman Church which exists; so much so, that religious mania of the most bizarre type is a prominent feature in the insanity of the island. In other words, from the Protestant point of view it is one of the most bigoted, intolerant, and priest-ridden that ever an unlucky Governor had to rule over. These are merely two different ways of looking at the same thing; the result is identical. In addition to the absolute command over one-third of the land, the priests have an equally absolute command over the wills, politics, ends, aims, and aspirations of a large majority of the possessors of the other two-thirds; and thus possess an overwhelming majority against the Government, which only holds its miserable third, without the power of influencing one inhabitant of it in any way whatever.

"What makes their exclusion the more bitter is that the priests have tasted the sweets of power, and know how entirely, were it but permitted, the whole civil government would pass into their hands. When the Council was first granted to the Maltese, the priests had the right of sitting in it as elected members—a right which they might have possessed at this moment, had they been but a little more wary. But they overdid the thing. With a want of astuteness and caution unusual with them, they were not content to have one or two of their class actually on the benches, and to rule the lay members

"quietly and unostentatiously, as they might easily have done, but they pressed in so recklessly that at last, out of the eight elected members, five (a clear majority) were priests.

"It would have been an interesting study to watch how the government of a fortress would have been carried on by a mixed committee of Roman Catholic priests and a minority of English Protestant soldiers; but this pleasure has been denied us. The Home Government, considering, perhaps, that the elements were slightly incongruous and antagonistic, decided that, on the whole, it might be better to insure a preponderance of the lay element, and ordered that for the future priests were to be considered as incapable of election; placing them, in fact, on a footing with Protestant clergymen of the Church of England. If this be a wrong thing, then it is doubly wrong to exclude English clergymen—men of like loyalty, affections, sympathies, and education with the rest of the people—from the House of Commons. Right or wrong, however, it is a question to be debated with the Home Government, and not to be used as a means of attack on the present Governor, who has merely had to carry out a decision arrived at before his accession to power."

A few statistics about Malta, taken from Mr. Webster's pamphlet,* may be interesting. "Taking the island in 1863, as compared with 1853, labour is 60 per cent. higher; manufactured grain increased 300 per cent.; consumption of meat increased 90 per cent.; average rent of property increased 33 per cent. There were 14,929 more pledges redeemed from the *Monte di Pietà* in 1863 than in 1853. In the savings-bank there were deposited £82,000 against £42,012 in 1853, although the lower Maltese still retain much of the Arab passion for burying their money. The general revenue has been augmented to the amount of £27,000 a year. During the last ten years

* "English Governors and Foreign Grumblers, or Malta in 1864."

the population has been increased by 10,000 souls; indeed, too rapidly to permit of employment being found for the more educated classes. Professional men are wretchedly paid, and the large proportion of priests, 1,000 in a population of 134,000, is a proof that even the miserable pittances on which most of them exist are prizes worth having. These facts, however, can hardly be laid entirely at the door of Sir Gaspard Le Marchant."

CHAPTER XVI.

MALTA UNDER BRITISH RULE.—SIR HENRY STORKS AND SIR PATRICK GRANT. 1864—1869.

SIR HENRY STORKS (1864) AND SIR PATRICK GRANT (1867).—On the departure from Malta of Sir G. Le Marchant, Major-General Ridley assumed the command of the forces and the civil government of the island until the arrival of Sir Henry Storks from the Ionian Islands, where for some years he had filled the position of Lord High Commissioner.

Sir Henry Storks at once commanded the respect and the good opinion of the Maltese. In character the very counterpart of his predecessor, in disposition a little more gentle, he silenced even the opposition of the unscrupulous scribblers in the local journals. Anxious to ascertain what the wants of the people really were, and resolved, if possible, to satisfy those wants, he gave audience to all who were desirous of laying before him what they might consider as grievances. The Governor's excessive politeness, in receiving everybody and listening to everybody, was the topic of general conversation in Malta; but the astonishment of Sir Henry Storks must have been great when he discovered that this unusual indulgence granted to the people was abused as only an Oriental race could abuse it. Anonymous letters, containing accusations against private individuals, were sent to him, and on the statements contained in these letters he was expected to act; but like a British soldier and an honourable man, he replied by putting the anonymous communications into the fire, and sternly command-

ing that no such letters should ever be addressed to him again. This little incident must have given Sir Henry an insight into the character of the people whom he had been called upon to rule in the name of his Queen. His attention was directed, in the first instance, to the education of the people, and one of his first acts was to appoint a commission to inquire into the condition of the primary schools all through the island. Whilst he was engaged in devising some plan to improve all the educational institutions in Malta, and at the same time carrying on to completion some of the public works commenced by his predecessor, he was, in the month of December 1865, summoned from Malta, and ordered to proceed to Jamaica to assist in restoring order after the unfortunate insurrection in that island. Once more, in the following December (1866), Sir Henry Storks landed in Malta, but only for a few brief months. In the spring of 1867 he retired from the position of Governor of Malta to fill an important post at home, and one month after his departure Lieutenant-General Sir Patrick Grant, the present Governor, entered upon the duties of his office.

In order to give the reader some idea of the actual condition of the people of Malta, I shall devote the remainder of this chapter to an account of the state of education in Malta, the administration of justice, and the religious belief of the people.

Education.—To an impartial observer it appears very strange that a people who have lived under British rule for nearly seventy years should be so far behind the age. It seems quite incomprehensible that education should have made such very little progress. The impediments to education in Malta have been three—the apathy (until very lately) of the British Government, the language, and the steady, though covert, resistance of the priesthood.

It was not until the visit of the Commissioners in 1836 that any efforts were made to promote the education of the people. It was Mrs. Austin, the wife of one of the Commissioners, who

in that year established four district schools, which achieved in time some success. A few years later the local Government established male and female schools in all the principal villages and populous districts of Malta and Gozo; and two benevolent English ladies, the Misses Sheppard, established an infant school in Valletta, which for some years proved a great boon to the population. For thirty years these schools have been in operation. What has been the result? What has been their influence on the bulk of the population? It is hardly perceptible. The people remain almost as ignorant, as degraded, as illiterate, as bigoted as if a book had never been seen amongst them—as if no attempt had ever been made to cultivate their intellectual and moral faculties. As has been already stated, Sir Henry Storks appointed a commission to inquire into the state of education in Malta at the time that he entered upon the government of the island. The Commissioners were gentlemen in every way worthy to fulfil the task allotted to them. They were—Colonel Romer, of the Royal Artillery; Mr. Emilio Sceberras, a native gentleman; and Dr. Baker, who had for many years been connected with the University at Corfu. These gentlemen, after a careful examination of the primary schools, reported that the senior classes in those schools were "unable to read fluently and correctly," and that "their English accent was decidedly bad;" that the pupils "broke down in the conjugation of the simplest verbs, both in Italian and English;" that in arithmetic they were "wretchedly backward;" that "the questions proposed in the schools are questions of habitual routine;" and that "the slightest deviation from the beaten track deranges the whole machinery." The Commissioners were required and expected in their Report to refer to not only what was worthy of blame, but also what was deserving of praise. They were, moreover, quite willing to accord whatever praise they considered to be due, both to pupils and teachers. And yet, on reading their Report, not one word of praise can be

found. Everything into which they inquired was found to be either unsatisfactory or indifferent. Here are their own words. Of one of the primary schools of Valletta they say :—"*Italian*—Reading and dictation indifferent, scarcely any knowledge of the meaning of words. *English*—Accent bad; no knowledge of the subject read. *Arithmetic*—Three out of twenty-seven pupils succeeded, after a considerable time, in working a short sum in simple multiplication." The Report proceeds to state of nearly every school examined what is stated above; the result of the examination into the condition of the schools being, that the Commissioners discovered that neither the English, Italian, nor Maltese language was taught; and that of arithmetic, history, and geography the pupils knew next to nothing. The existence of the schools, therefore, was in no respect a public benefit, and the people of Malta, in spite of all the talk that had been going on for years about education, were intellectually hardly superior to their Arab progenitors of the days of Count Roger the Norman. From Malta the Commissioners proceeded to Gozo. The following is their report of a secondary school examined on the 11th May, 1865 :—"Attention seemed to be paid to the teaching of Latin and Italian. The English class was composed of only *five* students. They had a fair knowledge of syntax, and their teacher is active and intelligent. In geography the questions put were very simple—restricted, in fact, to the mere outlines; but the students had a very limited knowledge of this branch. The arithmetic, considered an obligatory lesson, proved a disgraceful failure. The junior class, though studying algebra, could not do a simple sum in proportion. The commission even allowed the students to consult each other, thinking that their collective ability would enable them to make out a rational answer, but after considerable delay it was given up in despair. The master was then requested to put the same question to the senior class, composed of young men; but he replied that if the junior class could not

solve it, it would be useless to call upon the seniors, as they must long since have forgotten their arithmetic."

Now, how was this Report of honest and impartial Commissioners received by that portion of the press in Malta which was interested in keeping up constant political agitation, and in excluding the brilliant light of knowledge, in order to maintain the twilight of partial ignorance? Not with expressions of deep humiliation, not with words of honest indignation, but with bursts of wrath, and with the wild railing of men from whom reason had fled. The *Malta Observer* of the 31st July, 1865, says:—"We cannot abstain from noticing the ungentlemanly behaviour of the editors of some of the native journals, who, instead of discussing in a calm and dignified manner the Commissioners' Report, are influencing the lowest passions of the mob against the gentlemen who, in compliance with the desire of his Excellency the Governor, have consented to inquire into the state of the Lyceum and primary schools;" and in another number of the same journal we read these words:—"We regret to find that some of the local papers are attacking the Education Commissioners in the most disgraceful terms; and it is most humiliating for us to have to confess, that in a country which has enjoyed the most unlimited liberty of the press for the last twenty-eight years, such articles should be published as those which are soiling the columns of the *Corriere Mercantile.*"

If education be, as it certainly is, at so very low an ebb in Malta, it is not difficult to guess at the intellectual condition of what are there called and supposed to be the educated classes. The educational institutions of Malta, as has been already said, are of three kinds:—1, Primary and Secondary Schools; 2, the Lyceum; 3, the Government University. With these institutions to assist him in developing his intellectual faculties, what is the ordinary career at present open to a young Maltese belonging to what is generally known as middle-class society? After receiving the

scantiest possible amount of book-learning in the primary and secondary schools he passes into the Lyceum, where another modicum of information is doled out to him. Educated, in the highest sense of the word, he certainly is not; but instructed in the rudiments of knowledge, if he has any capacity at all, he possibly may be. After spending a year, perhaps two, at the Lyceum, he makes choice of a profession, or he looks to the local Government for employment, or else he gives his attention to commerce. Generally speaking, the great object of his ambition is a Government clerkship; and one chief reason for his anxiety to obtain this position is that, having obtained it, the necessity for further intellectual improvement ceases. Henceforward his duties are merely mechanical; his salary, though small, is punctually paid; and by diligent attention to the orders of his superior, coupled with a proper amount of obsequiousness when circumstances require, he is sure, by the time that his hair begins to turn grey, to have attained the position of first clerk or superintendent, with an income—not a princely one certainly—of £200 a year. This satisfies his ambition completely. At the age of twenty-one or twenty-two he marries, and by dint of extraordinary economy brings up a family. The aims of his sons are similar to his own, their aspirations are not one degree loftier, their education is quite as limited; and thus generation succeeds generation, and the heads of the Government departments obtain excellent machines for paltry salaries.

If, however, the young man fails to obtain the much-coveted honour of a situation under Government—a situation in which honour, such as it is, is nearly all that he gets—he turns his attention to commerce. A long term of apprenticeship is necessary; and when the apprenticeship is over, then comes the struggle. The young merchant wants capital. His operations must therefore be conducted on a limited scale. The commerce of the islands, too, is necessarily limited. Malta

exports nothing but a small quantity of cotton, which is sent to North Africa; it produces nothing that is not immediately consumed by its inhabitants, who require a great deal more for their support than the island produces. Commercial operations in Malta must therefore be restricted to the storing of goods brought into the island for re-exportation at some future time, according to the exigencies of the market in the East and elsewhere; and to the importation of goods required by the inhabitants, both native and English, and by the army and navy. These two branches of commerce have been monopolised by a few leading men, who have brought some talent and a good deal of capital into the field. These few naturally absorb the commerce of the island, leaving upwards of six thousand persons to struggle with almost insuperable difficulties for a livelihood, and to elbow one another at every turn, or to quarrel, like half-starved dogs, over a solitary bone.

There remains still another career open to the average native of Malta—one of the learned professions. Of these there are but two in Malta, law and medicine. In other countries divinity is included amongst the learned professions. It cannot be in Malta. The members of the two professions which alone deserve to be called learned are about two thousand in number; from which it would appear either that the people of Malta must be perpetually engaged in litigation and perpetually in need of medical advice, or else that both lawyers and physicians, considering the large proportion they bear to the whole population, must be nearly starved. If a Maltese young man selects the bar as his future profession, he passes from the Lyceum into the University, where his studies, although of a higher grade than in the former institution, are nevertheless such as require little or no mental effort. To any one who knows what is required of a barrister in England, France, Italy, or Germany, the law studies at the University must appear puerile indeed. With very ordinary abilities, and a

very small strain upon the intellectual powers, the degree of LL.D. is attained at the Malta Government University at a very early age; and the young doctor obtains a certificate from the Government, and is qualified to practise in the courts of law. The present President of the Court of Appeal in Malta obtained the degree of LL.D. at the age of *seventeen;* and although he is acknowledged to be a man of considerable talent and a good lawyer—a man, both as to his character and his ability, quite competent to fill the important position he occupies—yet the curriculum of studies in the University must be of a very limited kind, if any one, even a genius of the highest order, can be considered by the authorities worthy to obtain so important a degree at an age when the mental powers are only half developed. Let me not be understood to say that the Maltese gentlemen of the legal profession are ignorant of law and of the duties of their profession. By no means. Several of them, whom I could name, are really able men and good lawyers, as well as strictly honourable in the discharge of their duties. The judges are men (without an exception) whose knowledge of their profession is considerable, whose characters are without a stain, and whose devotion to duty is exemplary. But neither judges nor barristers obtained their learning at the Malta Government University. I am now speaking of the picked men at the bar, who possess a considerable knowledge of their profession; and I am sure that they will all admit that the greater part of their knowledge has been acquired by attendance on the legal schools of the Continent, by diligent reading after the termination of their course in the Malta University, and by constant practice at the bar, which gives to the observant man the knowledge of technicalities as well as shrewdness and smartness. As a necessary consequence of their talent, industry, and integrity, they attain in the course of time to the highest places in their profession. Now let us see what is the *money value* of these highest places. The salary

"of a judge is £450 or £500 per annum; and as promotion from the bar to the bench is always considered in Malta to bring with it a large increase of income, it follows that the receipts of the leading counsel in the shape of fees must fall far short of even these insignificant sums, and must be nearly as small as the wretched pittance of a curate in the Church of England or of Ireland.

It appears, then, from the foregoing observations, that £500 a year is the maximum income which a Maltese young man, who makes choice of the law as his profession, may expect to receive; and this after many years of toil, and only on the supposition that his ability and his industry are far in advance of those of his contemporaries. Now, as this necessarily can be the case only with the few, what becomes of the many? What becomes of the hundreds who aspire to the honours of the ermine without possessing the qualifications requisite to the attainment of it? They sink in a short time into utter insignificance; they become more restless, noisy, and empty-headed as they advance in years; they encourage litigation that they may replenish their purses; and as starvation stares them in the face, they become perfectly unscrupulous as to the means by which they obtain their fees.

All that I have said about the members of the legal profession applies with the same force to the hundreds of physicians and surgeons who pass through the medical school of the Malta University. There are able physicians and skilful surgeons amongst the native Maltese; but there is not room for all to live. The few who, from the force of circumstances, or from superior energy of character, or from extraordinary ability, reach the head of their profession, may perhaps consider themselves repaid for their laborious efforts, but even these rarely realise the very moderate sum of £300 a year. The resident physician in one of the Government hospitals, whose whole time is devoted to his duties, receives—the pages of the *Malta*

Government Gazette reveal the fact—£150 per annum; a sum hardly sufficient to tempt any one to become a disciple of Galen who is not influenced by some higher motive than that of gain. The Medical School of Malta is confessedly a good school. Medical students from Malta have occasionally proceeded to Paris, Naples, London, and Edinburgh, and have been found qualified for admission into the Universities of those cities; and even students who complete their medical education in Malta acquire, it cannot be denied, a very considerable theoretical knowledge of their profession. It is, however, impossible that all should acquire a *practical* knowledge of it. The climate of Malta is favourable to health; the lower orders are remarkably abstemious and industrious, and consequently are remarkably healthy. The Maltese gentry are equally temperate in their mode of living, and therefore equally healthy. The English—the only people in Malta who systematically disregard the rules of health—when they require medical advice, always apply to an English physician, two or three of whom have in a few years realised very large fortunes. What scope, then, has the young Maltese physician or surgeon for his abilities? Hardly any. And yet hundreds rush into the profession, with no prospect before them but starvation, or at least genteel beggary. There is really no necessity for this state of things so long as the medical branch of the British army and navy is open, as it certainly is, to any Maltese young man who can pass the prescribed examination, and who possesses the requisite certificates. The British colonies all over the world offer a fair field for exertion, with abundant remuneration. There does not appear to be any good reason why young Maltese medical men should waste their lives in an island where they have nothing to do and hardly anything to live upon. The remedy for this overcrowding of the legal and medical professions in Malta would appear to be emigration to the Continent or to the British colonies. But the Maltese will not emigrate. Young and old,

rich and poor, literate and illiterate, cling with wonderful tenacity to their island home.

Every one who has lived amongst the Maltese, and has observed them closely, is aware that they are blindly, foolishly attached to the island on which their lot has been cast. To an Englishman, or to any one, indeed, who has lived amidst green fields, waving forests, snow-capped mountains, and ever-flowing rivers; to any one who has witnessed the beauties of nature as they are to be seen in such countries as Switzerland and Italy, Malta is about as uninteresting a place as can be imagined. It is interesting from its association with many great events in ancient and modern history, as the present narrative has abundantly shown; and its climate, for about four months in the year, is delightful. But no place can be imagined so completely destitute of natural scenery as Malta; and for eight months in the year the inhabitant of Malta has to endure, with what patience he can, "scirocco, sun, and sweat," whilst for scenery he is regaled with the sight of burning rocks of white limestone, dusty roads flanked with stone walls, and rows of murderous-looking guns on the ramparts. A blade of grass in summer is about as rare as ice in the kingdom of Siam. And yet the Maltese sincerely thinks that there is no spot on earth so lovely as the island which gave him birth. I do not blame him for this. The feeling is an instinctive one. The Laplander would not exchange his native snow for the loveliest and greenest plains of Italy. The Arab of the desert would pine and die if he were transported to the richest valleys of picturesque Switzerland. And the Maltese who puts to sea, and loses sight of the white rock which he calls home, feels that he has abandoned what to him is the loveliest spot in creation. I will not quarrel with him for this. I respect the feeling. But with educated men this love of home, often the result of mere sentimentality, oftener the result of mere instinct, is not to be allowed to weigh

against a positive sense of duty. Is not the Irishman as much attached to "green Erin" as the Maltese is to white Malta? And yet thousands of Irishmen, educated and uneducated, emigrate every year to America, where they find a field for honest industry. Does not the Scotchman dearly love his "Caledonia stern and wild?" And yet, go where you will, you will meet the canny Scot making his way honourably through the world. The Germans and the Swiss are so enthusiastically attached to home that it requires the most determined efforts on their part to leave home and seek their fortune in a foreign land. Yet, when stern duty calls, all ties are severed, and away they go to acquire by toil an honourable independence. But a Maltese youth belonging to the two learned professions can rarely be induced to leave Malta by any consideration of future advantage. He will submit to any privations, he will forego any worldly advantages, he will gladly condemn himself to starve on an income less than that of a British mechanic, if he may but inhale his native scirocco and annually perspire under the scorching rays of his native sun. To him Malta, with all its discomforts and all its unloveliness, is still the prized, the cherished "flower of the world."*

As I am writing on the subject of education in Malta, it may not be amiss to remark that much of this unwillingness on the part of the Maltese to emigrate arises from downright ignorance concerning the rest of the world. Even the educated professional men in Malta are sadly deficient in general knowledge and in the literature of Europe. I have already hinted that the obstacles placed in the way of a Maltese who wishes to acquire information of any kind are almost insuperable. The English language is little understood, and consequently English literature is almost inaccessible. The Italian is the only language through which knowledge can be obtained, and Italian literature is more or less under the control of the Romish clergy—the

* *Fior del mondo*, "flower of the world," is the description invariably given of Malta by the natives of the island.

" enemies of progress at all times and in all countries. In the Public Library at Malta the number of works in the English language is about five hundred, whilst the number of works in the Italian language is about five thousand. I regard this lack of English books as one of the causes which are now operating to keep the Maltese in so depressed and backward a condition. They know little or nothing about the rest of the world—in this respect they are not unlike the inhabitants of Iceland—and they are, consequently, unable to institute a comparison between their own insignificant island and the rest of this great globe. When the Royal Commissioners, Mr. Austin and Mr. Lewis, visited Malta in 1836, they wrote to Lord Glenelg as follows:—"The structure and policy of the English Government, the opinions and sentiments of the English people, and the nature of the relations between England and Malta, are now understood imperfectly by the great majority of the Maltese." I am quite sure that if those two distinguished men could rise from their graves and visit Malta in 1870, they would say that the Maltese know as little about England now as they did thirty-four years ago. The ignorance that prevails, even amongst the educated Maltese, concerning the rest of the world is truly marvellous; and hence arises, partly, the unwillingness to leave home. Like the mariner in ancient times, who would not venture out of sight of land because he knew nothing of the countries which lay beyond the ocean, and because he had neither compass nor chart to guide him, so the Maltese seem to be afraid to trust themselves to explore unknown regions, lest they should never return to their sunburnt rock. Like the periwinkles on the shores of Malta, the natives cling to their home with a tenacity which nothing but brute force can overcome.

Part of this unwillingness to emigrate arises, doubtless, from poverty. The Maltese are not rich. They cannot afford to travel. They can with difficulty raise the funds necessary to carry them to England, to America, or to Australia, and they

are too proud to accept Government assistance. They, therefore, remain at home and bewail their poverty and their fate. In 1862 a most advantageous offer was made to the Maltese by Government, with a view to induce some of them to emigrate to Queensland. Not one embraced the offer. There was a climate similar to their own, a young colony requiring both labourers and professional men, and every prospect of success to encourage them. They were offered passages on very liberal terms, and that they might not be without the religious instruction to which they had been accustomed, arrangements were made for some of the priests to accompany the emigrants, and yet one and all, priests and people, refused to stir. In the winter of 1862-63 labour became scarce, and there was much poverty and much suffering amongst the very classes that had refused to emigrate. The labourers were glad to receive alms, and the professional men found themselves so pinched that they could spare very little for their poorer neighbours, who were supported mainly by contributions from the British community, whilst, if the offer of Government had been accepted, these very labourers and professional men might all have been thriving in Queensland. After this, it appears to me that both classes have only themselves to blame if they suffer privations at home. Until the people of Malta burst their bonds and learn more of the world by actual experience, by coming into actual contact with it, they will chafe and repine at what appears to them to be a hard lot; they will be unhappy and discontented.

It is not possible to dismiss this portion of my subject without repeating what I have already said on the influence of the Romish hierarchy in Malta in the matter of education. I assert, what to every Englishman who has lived in Malta is a well-known fact, that the natives of Malta are far behind the times in all kinds of knowledge; that in this enlightened age they are still groping in the darkness of ignorance; and that notwith-

standing their almost daily communication with England, they are really as senseless and as stupid as the aborigines of Australia. I may be told that I am greatly mistaken in my estimate of the condition of the native mind. I may be told that there are certain persons amongst the upper classes in Malta, and some in the middle ranks of Maltesé society, who are as intelligent and as well informed as any Englishman in the same rank of life. I may be told that the population of Valletta contains a large number of shrewd, clever individuals, quite as large a number, perhaps, as are to be found in any town of the same extent in England. And when I have been told all this, I may be told, in addition, that all my assertions respecting the ignorance prevailing in Malta have been triumphantly disproved. I admit that amongst the upper and middle classes of native Maltese are some who will safely bear comparison even with educated Englishmen. I could even mention the names of these persons were it necessary to do so. But my assertions respecting the gross ignorance of the native population will still remain true, and their force will not be in the least degree weakened by this admission. Valletta is not Malta, any more than Paris (*parvis componere magna*) is France. I say (and every one who knows Malta knows that what I say is true) that in the *casals*, or villages, the people are not one whit better educated or more civilised than the Bedouin Arabs. They are kept in the most deplorable ignorance; they can neither read nor write. They are accustomed to render blind obedience to their superiors. They know nothing of the Government under which they live. To them it is a matter of supreme indifference whether Queen Victoria or the Tycoon of Japan presides over the affairs of the island; they know just as much about the one as about the other. A labouring man once informed me that the *Sultan* (*el Soldan*, as he called him) was the supreme ruler of the island. Now, I maintain that after seventy years

of British occupation this is a strange state of affairs. In England, and in many parts of the Continent of Europe, nearly every labouring man can read his newspaper, and can talk, not very accurately perhaps, but at any rate with some degree of intelligence, on the great public questions of the day. Does any man in his senses believe that a single Maltese belonging to the humbler ranks of society knows what is going on in the world around him, or could give an intelligent opinion on the most ordinary political events? How should he know anything, poor deluded man? He cannot read and judge for himself. The village oracle is the parish priest, and the shrine whence the parish priest derives his inspired dicta is a newspaper called the *Ordine*, a clerical organ of tendencies which we in England and Ireland are accustomed to call ultramontane. In England, and in some of the more advanced countries on the Continent of Europe, every man is free to form his own religious opinions, and to worship God, the common Father of all, in the manner which commends itself most to his own judgment. In Malta the priests contrive to keep the public mind in a state of stagnation; and truly, if ignorance be bliss, and if apathy be the height of human enjoyment, then—but not otherwise—the Maltese are supremely happy.

Religious fervour is one of the leading features in the character of the Maltese people, and it discovers itself, as every traveller may perceive, in the building of churches and chapels; in the erection of images at the corners of the streets, to be devoutly worshipped by the populace; in the frequent observance of saints' days; and in the endless processions, at which the lower classes gaze with feelings akin to those with which a London mob looks at the show on Lord Mayor's day. I will not stop to prove that all this has nothing to do with true religion, but that it is rather a hindrance in the way of the promotion of true religion amongst the people. What I wish to point out is, that the clergy have a direct interest in the maintenance of the system of

religion which at present exists in Malta; that that system is opposed to intellectual freedom, and that therefore education, which leads in time to intellectual emancipation, is discouraged. In countries where the people have once got an impetus in the right direction, the clergy are compelled in self-defence to be educated. They must either go along with the stream, or they must stand in piteous helplessness on the banks, and see their flocks drifting away from them. The English clergy before the Reformation were, with few exceptions, steeped in ignorance; but the English clergy since the Reformation have ranked amongst the most highly-educated men in Europe. True religion has not suffered by the promotion of education; but the human systems dignified with the sacred name of religion certainly have suffered. The consequence of the advance of learning in England was the overthrow of the religious system which prevailed before the Reformation, the denial of the supremacy of the Pope, and the establishment of the Protestant Churches, which, though differing in external rites and discipline, agree in all the essential doctrines of the Christian faith. The successive steps by which this state of things was brought about are well known to every attentive reader of history.

It cannot be denied that amongst the Romish clergy of the present day there are many men eminent for their learning and piety. Even in Malta there are some who possess a considerable amount of learning; and a regard for truth requires me to state that the clergy of Malta are—so far as I have been able to ascertain—with hardly an exception, moral and correct, one might almost venture to say exemplary, in their lives. But whilst the heads of the clergy in Malta, as in other Roman Catholic countries, are more or less learned, the inferior clergy are hardly to be distinguished from the peasantry except by their dress. The inferior clergy, rendered bigoted by ignorance, look with suspicion on everything that is stamped with the religion of England. In their eyes England is a country that

was once—they do not presume to say when—governed by a bad king, who wished to put away his wife and marry another, and who quarrelled with the Pope because he would not allow him to indulge his sinful passions. All the people of England quarrelled with the Pope because the king did so, and thus they became heretics, and heretics they have been ever since. This is the version of that wonderful event that shook all Europe three hundred years ago, which, I am assured, the inferior clergy of Malta implicitly believe, and constantly repeat to their flocks. England is in their eyes a land of heretics. The English are rich and powerful, and therefore to be treated with respect; but they are tainted with heresy, and therefore all close intercourse with them and all intimate acquaintance with their writings are to be avoided. A suspicion is, therefore, created in the minds of the middle and lower classes of Maltese that every English book contains in it more or less of pollution; the less, therefore, that is known of the English language the better. This idea is widely disseminated by the inferior clergy, and is encouraged by the heads of the Church, who doubtless know better, but who have a system to uphold. The system which every Roman Catholic ecclesiastic is sworn to uphold is the system of which the Supreme Pontiff is the head. The Romish ecclesiastic, secular or regular, is forced by his profession to sacrifice the purest and noblest of human affections, those that spring up in the domestic circle. The bishop, priest, or deacon, after his ordination, loses his nationality. He becomes a minister and peer of one stupendous empire, which claims dominion over the whole globe, and of which Rome is the capital. Like the envoy or minister of any foreign Government, he observes the laws of the state in which his master may have placed him, and he respects for a time the authority of the local magistrate; but the Roman Pontiff is his natural sovereign, and the welfare and honour of the Pontiff are the appropriate objects of his care. Hence we have in Malta *imperium in*

"*imperio.* Conceal it from ourselves as we may, state it in mild terms, as some say we ought to do, for fear of giving offence in these days, when Romish ecclesiastics find it convenient to affect a very considerable amount of sensitiveness, nevertheless the fact remains,—the real rulers in Malta are the *priests.* In their hands are the consciences of the people. To them implicit obedience is rendered; and, as I have already shown, they are so numerous, that every individual must be perpetually under the *surveillance* of one member or another of the clerical body. On the maintenance of the present state of affairs their influence mainly depends, for an enlightened people would break from off their necks the yoke of bondage. As long as the priests in Malta remain what they are at present, so long will every effort made by the Government to educate the people be thwarted, at least within certain limits. Absolute ignorance on the part of the people they will hardly venture to require, amidst the enlightenment of the nineteenth century; but they will permit only that amount of education which is compatible with the maintenance of their spiritual authority; for, as Lord Macaulay says of the Jesuits, "they appear to have discovered the precise point to which intellectual culture can be carried without risk of intellectual emancipation." *

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE.—In treating of the subject of education in Malta, I have mentioned three impediments which have stood in the way of its progress. One of these impediments is the language. Arabic mixed with Italian is the vernacular of the island, but it is corrupt Arabic—such Arabic as can neither be written nor printed; and if it could, the people, although able to speak the language, are profoundly ignorant of the Arabic characters, and therefore would be unable to read it. The Maltese language has frequently been

* An attempt was made in 1846 to promote education in Malta by the foundation of the "Malta Protestant College;" but, for reasons which cannot here be specified, the college proved a complete failure.

written in the Roman character, but being an Oriental or Semitic language, many of its sounds cannot be expressed in any other than an Oriental alphabet. I have already shown how this acts as a barrier to all education—how the Maltese child is compelled to learn either English or Italian, one of two foreign languages, before he can acquire any information from books. The language is, however, a still more formidable barrier in the way of the administration of justice.

I never could understand why the Italian should have been adopted as the language of the courts of law in Malta It is not the language of the people, and it is not the language of the Government. It is a foreign language, known only to a few belonging to the educated classes of the native society, and even these few seldom speak it quite grammatically. The native gentry, the professional men, the merchants, and some few others may, however, be regarded as having a tolerable acquaintance with the Italian language; but to the mass of the people it is an unknown tongue. To all the English residents, moreover, as well as to the thousands of officers and men in our army and navy stationed for various periods in Malta, the Italian is also a foreign language, an unknown tongue. And yet the laws of the island are published in Italian as well as in English, barristers plead only in Italian, judges sum up in Italian, and prisoners are condemned or acquitted in Italian. All contracts and all other legal documents are drawn up in Italian, to the great dismay of the English residents, who find it hard enough to understand the technicalities of the law in their own language, but are utterly confounded at seeing them clothed in a foreign dress. I shall never forget the perplexity and the disgust of an English lady who once brought me the lease of a house, written out by her solicitor in most barbarous Italian, not one word of which she was able to understand, and of which she found it extremely difficult, indeed almost impossible, to obtain anything like a correct translation, so

" that she was completely at the mercy of the framer of the document.

Now how does this affect the administration of justice, at any rate in criminal matters? An Englishman, ignorant of Italian, is tried for some crime. All the proceedings are carried on in a tongue unknown to him. He understands not one word of what witnesses testify against him, not one word of what is urged by counsel in his defence, not one word of the judge's comment on his case, not one word of the verdict of acquittal, or the sentence of condemnation, pronounced against him, except just so much as may perchance happen to be communicated to him by an interpreter, who is always a Maltese, and who sometimes possesses a very imperfect knowledge both of English and Italian. Can a man in such a position ever feel satisfied that his trial has been fairly conducted? Many and bitter were the complaints that were often poured into my ears by British soldiers and sailors under sentence in the Coradino Prison at Malta, when I was doing duty as chaplain of that institution. Most of these men, I am convinced, were fairly convicted and justly condemned, but it was quite impossible to convince them that they had had an impartial trial. Some averred that they were wholly innocent of the charges brought against them; and it was impossible to convince these that a trial before an English judge and jury would not have resulted in their acquittal.

An objection may be made here. It may be said that there was no more injustice in the cases alluded to above than there would be in the case of an Italian being tried in London in an English court of justice. I answer, the cases which I have stated are cases of daily occurrence in Malta. The case of an Italian being tried in England is one which seldom occurs. The former is the rule, the latter the exception. But take another case. Let the prisoner be a native of Malta. The injustice is quite as great. He is in precisely the same pre-

dicament as the Englishman, unless he happen to be a member of the educated classes. The Italian language is as much a foreign language to every Maltese, except a few educated gentlemen, as it is to every Englishman resident on the island. And then, again, what shall be said of the jury empannelled to try the facts of the case? The jury is in general composed both of Maltese and English, the former being generally taken from the class of tradesmen or small shopkeepers, who possess the scantiest possible knowledge of Italian; and these men are required to pronounce a verdict of "guilty or not guilty," with perhaps a vague, misty, indefinite notion floating before their minds of the facts which have been presented to them. No wonder that they often, as is alleged, first ascertain the opinion of the shrewdest man composing the jury, and then from sheer inability to understand what had been said in court, acquiesce in that opinion, and pronounce a verdict accordingly.

What is the remedy for this state of things?—for a remedy is certainly needed. I say, Abolish the Italian language as soon as possible as the language of the courts of justice. Let the Maltese pay the Italian language all the respect it deserves as the language of Dante and Petrarch, of Ariosto and Tasso; let them listen to the Italian language, if they will, melodiously sung by their vocalists; but let it, without unnecessary delay, cease to be the language of the courts of law. Substitute for it the English language. The Maltese are not Italians; they never were Italians. They are Arabs. Very few of them understand the Italian language. Most of them understand Arabic, their mother-tongue. But as it would be impossible, for many reasons, to adopt the Arabic language in Malta, as the Maltese language is not pure but corrupted Arabic—a *patois*, in fact, of Arabic—why should not the manly, expressive, noble language of the Anglo-Saxon race be adopted? No violence could be done to national feeling, for the Maltese, Arabs though they be, have no sympathy with the sons of

Ishmael, the disciples of Mohammed. Why not then have the English language well taught in every school? Why not insist on every child, rich and poor, being taught the English language, since from the force of circumstances he *must* be taught some language besides his own before he can begin to acquire information from books? I cannot see why this should not be done, except that the step would be, for the reasons already alluded to, displeasing to the priests. The Government is apparently afraid to suggest the general adoption of the English language, because it might be interpreted to be an encroachment on the ancient rights of the people; because it would look like a proselytising movement; because it would certainly be represented by the priests to be an invasion of the religion which the Government has promised to protect and to uphold. So that, through fear of incurring ecclesiastical censure, justice must continue to be administered in Malta in a language "not understanded of the people."

Let us see now what is the machinery provided for the administration of justice in Malta.

The Order of St. John introduced into Malta a code of laws based on the canon law of the Church of Rome. The same code of laws, or one closely resembling it, had been for several centuries in force in Sicily. Some of the later Grand Masters, notably Manoel de Vilhena and Rohan, revised and enlarged this code; and when British rule was established in Malta, the Code Rohan was accepted as the code according to the terms of which the island was to be governed. As circumstances required, changes were made in this code, at first by the authority of successive Governors, but during the last twenty years by the legislative enactments of the Council of Government, confirmed by the sovereign.

In 1814 Sir Thomas Maitland made an attempt to reform the procedure at law, and to organise the courts of justice on a new plan. He published, with this intention, a general constitution

for all the courts, and a statute for each one in particular. One grave objection, however, to the scheme of Sir Thomas Maitland was the expense attendant on the proceedings in each court. The Maltese are perhaps the most litigious people in the world, and in order to gratify the taste of the people for going to law about every trifle, it was found necessary to simplify the procedure in the courts.

After a variety of changes had taken place, it was found that no fewer than eight distinct tribunals were required to enable the administration of justice to be carried out satisfactorily. These tribunals are the First and Second Halls of the Civil Court, the Criminal Court, the First and Second Halls of Appeal, the Police Court, the Small Debts Court, and the District Courts of the Syndics, of which there are twenty-two, one for each village. From all these courts there lies an appeal to Her Majesty in Council, and in ecclesiastical matters an appeal to the Court of Rome.

How shall I describe the scene daily witnessed in a Malta court of justice? The passages leading to the court are crowded with anxious and excited suitors; the court itself is more like a bear-garden or a menagerie of wild beasts. Counsel vociferates at counsel; suitors on both sides indulge in angry expressions; the judge occasionally engages in an undignified altercation with counsel for the prosecution or with counsel for the defence; the idle crowd beyond the barrier indulges freely in conversation, whilst the crier of the court ever and anon utters a prolonged hiss-s-s-s, with a view to enforce silence. And thus, amidst endless clamour, angry recrimination, and a worse than Babel confusion of tongues, justice is supposed to be administered. A decision of the lower courts is never accepted as final. The party against whom the lower court has decided invariably appeals to the higher; and it is a common saying in Malta that if you go to law you should so contrive as to procure an adverse decision in the lower court, for the Supreme Court of Appeal,

in nearly every case brought before it, reverses the decision of the lower court. Let any one who has had the misfortune to be involved in a Malta lawsuit recal to mind the circumstances of his case, and ask himself whether, if the First or Second Hall of the Civil Court had decided against his claim, the remark of his solicitor was not this—"So much the better, Sir; for the Court of Appeal will reverse this decision, and we gain our suit?" Every solicitor in Malta knows that this is the rule; and it is a rule with remarkably few exceptions. I do not pretend to account for so extraordinary a phenomenon. I merely state a fact.

Trial by jury, in certain criminal cases, was introduced into Malta by a proclamation issued in the year 1829. In the year 1844 trial by jury was permitted for all crimes punishable with imprisonment for five years and upwards; and in 1855 it was extended to the trial of all crimes without distinction, including also libels and every abuse of the liberty of the press.

The gentlemen selected to reform the laws of Malta in 1825 were Sir John Stoddart, Chief Justice at Malta; J. Kirkpatrick, Esq.; Robert Langslow, Esq., Attorney-General; with Dr. Bonnici and Dr. Bonavita, two of the native judges. One of the questions discussed by these gentlemen was whether the English or Italian was to be the text in which the new laws should be written. The English members of the commission, with the exception of Mr. Kirkpatrick, were in favour of English; the Maltese members in favour of Italian. The arguments on both sides were examined by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and a decision given in favour of Italian. What the result of that decision has been, I have already shown.

In the year 1835 were published the Penal Code and the Laws of Procedure and Penal Organisation. These were revised and amended four years after by three of the native judges appointed by the local Government. The amended

code was in 1842 submitted to the Imperial Government, who committed it to Mr. Andrew Jameson, a Scotch lawyer, to examine it and bring it into harmony with British law. Mr. Jameson made his report on the code in 1843, and in the following year the Government of Malta appointed a commission to report on Mr. Jameson's Report. As might have been expected, this commission fell foul of Mr. Jameson, and suggested endless alterations; but the Government, disregarding these suggestions, which it would have been inconvenient to entertain, committed the final revision of the code to the Crown Advocate. He put the finishing-stroke to it, and it was published in 1848; but the Council of Government, two years after, insisted on revising some portions of it; and then were enacted the scenes which finally led to the exclusion of priests from the Council, and in which Canon Amato, as I have already related, took a leading and not a very creditable part.

The code, as finally revised by the Council in 1850, is the standard by which justice is now administered in Malta. To enter into the details of that code would be tedious, and would hardly be of any interest to the general reader. I may, however, be permitted to say, from actual knowledge of the contents of that code, that its provisions are on the whole fair and impartial, and the spirit which pervades it such as we should naturally expect in a free and civilised community. The people of Malta, however, are still in so backward a state, as I have shown in the section on education, that the machinery for administering the law sanctioned by the code is a little too complex for them to appreciate or to understand. The summary justice of a drum-head court-martial would often be more to the purpose than the elaborate process of trial by jury. Nothing can be more absurd than to entrust to a people like the Maltese such a privilege as that of trial by jury. They cannot be brought to understand the nature of it; they are utterly incapable of weighing evidence. If they were capable

of weighing evidence, they are almost absolutely ignorant of the language in which that evidence is given; and the result is, that their verdicts are the most unreasonable and senseless ever heard in a country calling itself civilised. Party spirit and religious feeling constantly sway their decisions. When the prisoner is a native, the jury, if his offence has been committed against a foreigner, become his apologists; when he is a foreigner, if his offence has been committed against a native, they become his assailants. Let one case out of many suffice. *Ex uno disce omnes.*

In the summer of the year 1856, Captain Graves, a distinguished officer of the Royal Navy, who then filled the position of Superintendent of the Ports in Malta, was openly assassinated in the principal street of Valletta at noon, in the presence of large numbers of persons passing to and fro on their ordinary business. His assassin was a boatman whom Captain Graves, in the discharge of his duty, had a few days before condemned to some very slight punishment for a breach of discipline. Springing upon his victim as a cat would on a mouse, the villain buried a sharp knife in his abdomen; then drawing it out reeking with blood, he walked to the neighbouring police-station, surrendered himself to the police, exhibited the knife, declared that he had stabbed Captain Graves, and expressed a hope that the wound would prove mortal; after which he was of course detained in custody, whilst his unfortunate victim was taken in a dying condition to his home, which he had left about an hour before in perfect health. A few hours after Captain Graves received this wound he died from the inflammation caused by it. All these facts were proved in evidence, and are known to be facts to every one who was in Malta at the time. Never in the history of the world was there a clearer case of wilful and deliberate murder perpetrated by a man in full possession of his senses, and capable of reflecting on the consequences of his actions. The feeling

on the part of the English residents in Malta was one of intense indignation, restrained only by the thought that the murderer would certainly suffer the penalty of his terrible crime, and that thus the law would be vindicated. The feeling openly expressed by many Maltese, as in Ireland on the occurrence of an agrarian outrage, was one of sympathy with the murderer, who, they declared, had been provoked to take away life by having a punishment inflicted on him quite disproportioned to the offence against discipline of which he had been guilty. The verdict of the jury before whom the prisoner was tried, after an hour's deliberation, was as follows—I quote from the authorised report of the trial:—"The jury unanimously declare that the accused, Giuseppe Meli, is guilty,* with the circumstance that the death of Captain Thomas Graves did *not* ensue in consequence of the wound inflicted on him. However, one against eight declares that the accused inflicted the wound with the intention of causing grievous harm."

The absurdity of this verdict was so apparent that the judge refused to receive it, and said, "It is impossible for me to accept a declaration in these terms. I put the following question to you:—Is the accused guilty of grievous harm on the person of Captain Graves, followed by death from an accidental cause supervening, and not from the nature alone and the natural consequences of the wound?" The reply of the foreman was, "We have declared that the death of Captain Graves ensued by the bad treatment. The wound was badly *cured*, and therefore he died." The guilt of the prisoner was thus transferred to the medical gentlemen who attended the wounded man.

On retiring to reconsider their verdict, the jury produced

* The indictment charged the prisoner with *wilful homicide;* "which crime he committed, having *maliciously* and with the intention of killing him, caused the death of Captain Graves, by inflicting an incised wound on the abdomen, of which wound the said Captain Graves died."

These are the words of the indictment, technicalities and superfluous terms being omitted; and every statement in it was sustained by credible evidence.

the following:—"The jury declare that the accused, Giuseppe Meli, is guilty of grievous voluntary harm caused to the person of Captain Thomas Graves, followed by death in consequence of supervening accidental causes, and not from the nature alone or natural consequences of the wound. Unanimously." This verdict was recorded, and the prisoner was sentenced to imprisonment with hard labour for nine years.

I make no other comment than this on the foregoing case—that amongst a people where such a verdict is possible, the object of trial by jury is not understood; and as such verdicts are not uncommon in Malta, the system of trial by jury, instead of being the best mode of arriving at the truth respecting the guilt or innocence of a prisoner, appears to be only a solemn farce, if not something worse.

Religion.—The traveller who visits Malta for the first time cannot help feeling amazed at the immense number of churches and chapels which he sees all around him. If he should happen to be a person unaccustomed to make good use of his eyes, his ears will reveal the fact to him before he has been many hours in the island. The ceaseless bell-ringing from morning till night, and from night till morning, will, if he be of nervous temperament, drive him to the very verge of distraction. Then he will meet swarms of priests and friars in the streets, all wearing the sombre garb of the Romish ecclesiastic; and he will see at the corner of every principal street an image of some saint mounted on a pedestal, to be worshipped by the ignorant populace. The people of Malta are, according to their idea of religion, a religious people, and, on the whole, not an immoral or ill-conducted people. Their religion, however, takes the gross form in which we find it in Italy, in Spain, in South America, in all countries completely under the ecclesiastical dominion of Rome. It is a religion addressed exclusively to the senses; a religion made up of dresses, music, incense, flowers, images, candles, and processions, with neither life nor

spirituality in it; such a religion as is characteristic of a people in a condition of intellectual infancy.

If St. Paul could revisit the scene of his shipwreck; if he could again dwell amongst the people who call on him as their patron saint; if he could walk through the streets of their towns and villages; if he could enter their churches, how his noble heart would be stirred within him at the sight of a people professing to revere his name, but wholly given to idolatry!

Painful as the sight of Romish idolatry is to the Protestant Christian who visits Italy or Spain, it is still more painful in Malta, where it flourishes under the sanction of a Government Protestant at least in name. It is not many years since Protestant soldiers were required to present arms at a priest carrying the Host in public procession, and to fire salutes when ceremonies connected with a worship which every Protestant believes to be idolatrous were performed in the Cathedral of St. John. The force of public opinion no longer permits this to be done; but if public opinion in England had not been very distinctly expressed in this matter, our British Government would have continued till now to exact this duty of Protestant soldiers, just as for many years attendance at the rites of Juggernauth was exacted of civilians in India.*

It is extremely difficult to give an account of the religion of the Maltese without in the same breath referring to their amusements, so strangely are the two intermixed.

The chief recreations of the Maltese have more or less connection with their religious ceremonies. The numerous processions afford opportunities to the stranger of seeing every class of the people in their best attire congregated to witness the scene. The two principal religious processions are those on the day

* Thirty-five years ago Captain Atchinson and Lieutenant Dawson, of the Royal Artillery, were tried by court-martial and cashiered for refusing to order a salute to be fired on the anniversary of San Lorenzo, the tutelar saint of Vittoriosa.

before Good Friday, in which all the events of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ are represented by life-size images carried on men's shoulders through the streets of Valletta; and on the festival of San Gregorio, in commemoration of deliverance from an epidemic which prevailed some hundreds of years ago, and which the saint, by his miraculous power, is said to have checked. These two processions are so unique that a description of them will not be uninteresting to the reader.

On the evening of Holy Thursday a long train of priests and members of various religious confraternities leaves the church called *Ta Gesù* a little before sunset. The procession moves slowly along, the priests and lay brethren walking in single file on each side of the street, bearing huge wax candles in their hands, and chanting the penitential psalms. The images are carried at equal intervals throughout the length of the procession. A military band plays a solemn slow march. Amongst the numerous banners carried in the procession is one on which are inscribed the letters S.P.Q.R. (*Senatus Populusque Romanus*), and a bugler now and then executes on his bugle the "advance," to indicate that the procession is moving towards Calvary, where the scene of the crucifixion is to be enacted. A gorgeous bed covered with a canopy, hung with rich curtains embroidered with gold, on which is stretched a life-size figure of the Redeemer, brings up the rear of the procession, which is followed by immense crowds, repeating in a low voice the prayers appointed for the occasion. Some years ago a sight used to be witnessed which filled Protestant lookers-on with horror and astonishment. A crowd of penitents dragging after them heavy iron chains, which were fastened by cords to their bare feet, closed the mournful procession. The faces of these penitents were covered, and over their persons was thrown a serge garb. Many of them, it was easily seen, notwithstanding the attempt at concealment, were women, who

could with difficulty draw the heavy chains after them, and who not unfrequently fainted under their severe exertions. Year after year, as this inhuman spectacle was witnessed, public opinion strongly condemned the priesthood who sanctioned and even encouraged it, until at last the late Bishop Caruana absolutely forbade it. For the last twenty years and more, penitents have ceased to make this painful exhibition of their self-inflicted sufferings; but the same or similar penances are inflicted and endured privately in Malta, as in all other countries where the religion of Rome is "dominant." The procession on the eve of Good Friday is, however, still amongst the sensational religious sights to be witnessed in Malta. Slowly it wends its way through the principal streets of Valletta by torchlight, followed by crowds of devotees, whose religious enthusiasm is wound up to the highest pitch; and about an hour after midnight priests, lay brethren, image carriers, bearers of banners, performers on musical instruments, thurifers, acolytes, and devotees return to the church whence they set out, to listen to a sermon on the events which preceded and accompanied the passion of the Saviour, and to indulge in religious excitement, which goes far towards dethroning reason and common sense. On Good Friday the churches are hung with black, the organs and bells are silenced, candles are extinguished, no masses are said, and a death-like stillness everywhere prevails. Friars are seen gliding with stealthy steps from shrine to shrine; mourners overwhelmed by feelings of devotion recite impassioned prayers at the principal altars of each church; Jesuit priests deliver orations on the seven dolors (as they are called in the Romish missals) of Christ; and the city of Valletta wears an air of solemnity and decorum not generally witnessed. A traveller arriving in Malta from England on that day would pronounce the island plague-stricken. But at ten o'clock on the following morning the scene suddenly changes. In an instant every bell in the city

is violently rung by enthusiastic boy-volunteers, who enjoy the fun quite as much as their elders do the supposed grandeur of the scene; guns are fired from the "cavalier;" squibs fly in all directions; the black hangings disappear as if by magic from the churches, and are replaced by crimson drapery; the candles are relit; thousands of flags are displayed from thousands of balconies; and when the officiating priest in his many-coloured robes gives the expected signal from the high altar of the Cathedral of St. John, the organ thunders forth its rolling notes, and a full choir, engaged for the occasion from the Theatre Royal, as if overcome by uncontrollable religious emotion, bursts forth into a magnificent chorus, *Gloria in excelsis Deo.* The firing and bell-ringing continue at intervals through the day, and the whole population, quite casting off the appearance of mourning which marked the preceding day, gives itself up to religious excitement not altogether unmixed with sensual enjoyment. Very early on the morning of Easter Sunday, two hours before daylight, an immense crowd assembles in the Strada Reale; a large image of Christ, bearing the banner of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, is lifted on men's shoulders, and with shouts of "Viva! the Lord is risen!" is carried through the principal streets of the city. Guns are again fired from the battery called the cavalier, after which the image is deposited in the church whence it was taken, and the crowd disperses in search of amusement, satisfied that a great religious duty had been discharged, to the edification of all the "faithful."

The feast of San Grégorio is celebrated by a procession composed of all the lay brethren in communion with the parish churches throughout the island, the clergy of all the towns and villages, the canons of the cathedral, and the bishop. These all assemble on the morning of the Wednesday immediately following Easter Sunday at the village called Casal Nuovo, and walk as far as another village called Zeitun, or the village of olives. During the slow solemn march the Litany is recited

by the priests, the whole of the attendant multitude joining in the responses. On their arrival at Zeitun all visit the Church of San Gregorio, where high mass is said, whilst at certain intervals during the ceremony the crowd raises the cry, "Misericordia!" The rest of the day is spent in eating and drinking, in playing games of various kinds, in singing, and uproarious merriment. One curious custom ought here to be recorded. Every country-girl, when engaged to be married, makes a formal stipulation with her intended bridegroom that, on the festival of San Gregorio immediately following the marriage, he shall escort her to the festival, and treat her to a piece of a peculiar kind of sweetmeat made of sugar, honey, and hempseed. One of the national songs of Malta thus alludes to this custom. I give the original, and subjoin a translation:—

"L'Aghrayyes Yaghmlu il Pattyiet.

"Fl' iscritta matrimoniali
Yaghmlu il pattyiet conjugali,
Li yihoda fil festa ta San Gregor;
Yonsobha fuk il hait,
Yishtreelha shriek kobbait,
Li ikun tal cannebusa
Ghash minun tiggosta is-sinyura gharusa."

"The Sweetheart's Bargain.

"In the wedding or matrimonial contract,
They make this conjugal bargain,
That he (the bridegroom) shall take her to the feast of San Gregorio,
Shall set her upon the wall,
Shall buy her a slice of sweetmeat
Made of hempseed,
For that is the kind that best pleases his lady, the bride."

Besides the religious ceremonies which I have described there are others, some of which take place in Valletta and others in the country; but all combine, in a way strange to those who have not lived in Roman Catholic countries, amusement and devotion.

Indeed, to the Protestant traveller who visits Malta and who

enters the churches of the Maltese, and is present at their religious ceremonies, the words of Gibbon have a strange significance, as showing that ignorance and religious fanaticism always go together, and are everywhere, and in every age, marked by the same peculiar features. "If," says Gibbon, "in the beginning of the fifth century, Tertullian or Lactantius had been suddenly raised from the dead to assist in the festival of some popular saint or martyr, they would have gazed with astonishment and indignation on the profane spectacle which had succeeded to the pure and spiritual worship of a Christian congregation. As soon as the doors of the church were thrown open they must have been offended by the smoke of the incense, the perfume of flowers, and the glare of lamps and tapers, which diffused at noonday a gaudy, and, in their opinion, a sacrilegious light; if they approached the balustrade of the altar, they made their way through the prostrate crowd, consisting for the most part of strangers and pilgrims, who resorted to the city on the vigil of the feast, and who already felt the strong intoxication of fanaticism, and perhaps of wine; their devout kisses were imprinted on the walls and pavement of the sacred edifice; and their fervent prayers were directed, whatever might be the language of their Church, to the bones and blood or ashes of the saints, which were usually concealed by a linen or silken veil from the eyes of the vulgar."

APPENDICES.

I.

Computation of Distance from Clauda to Point of Koura.

Point of Koura, lat. N.	35°	56′	Mer. parts		2313
Clauda ditto	34	52	Ditto		2235
Diff.	1	4 = 64′	Diff.		78

Point of Koura, long. E.	14°	25′	
Clauda ditto	24	2	
Diff.	9	37	= 577′

As mer. diff. of lat. = 78	log.	1·892095
is to rad.	log.	10·000000
so is diff. of long. = 577′	log.	2·761176
to tang. course = 82° 17′	log.	10·869081

Again, as rad.	log.	10·000000
is to diff. lat. 64′	log.	1·806180
so is sec. course = 82° 17′	log.	12·678187
to distance = 476·6	log.	2·678187

II.

LIST OF GRAND MASTERS WHO GOVERNED MALTA FROM 1530 TO 1798, WITH THE DATES OF THEIR ACCESSION.

1.	L'Isle Adam	1530
2.	Peter Du Pont	1534
3.	Didier de St. Jaille	1536
4.	John d'Omedes	1536
5.	Claude de la Sengle	1553
6.	John de la Vallette	1557
7.	Peter de Monte	1568
8.	John de la Cassière	1572
9.	Hugo de Verdalle	1582
10.	Martin Garzes	1595
11.	Alophius Vignacourt	1601
12.	Louis Mendes Vasconcellos	1622
13.	Anthony de Paule	1623
14.	Lascaris Castellar	1635
15.	Martin de Redin	1657
16.	Annet de Clermont Gessan	1660
17.	Raphael Cotoner	1660
18.	Nicholas Cotoner	1663
19.	Gregory Caraffa	1680
20.	Adrian Vignacourt	1690
21.	Raymond Perellos	1697
22.	Mark Anthony Zondadari	1720
23.	Anthony Manoel de Vilhena	1722
24.	Raymond d'Espuig	1736
25.	Emanuel Pinto	1741
26.	Ximenes de Texada	1773
27.	Emanuel de Rohan	1775
28.	Ferdinand de Hompesch	1797

III.

THE CARNIVAL DIFFICULTY.

Extract from a Despatch addressed by GOVERNOR SIR PATRICK STUART, G.C.M.G., *to the* RIGHT HONOURABLE W. E. GLADSTONE, M.P., *dated Malta, 27th February,* 1846.

"As you will probably see in the newspapers, or hear from other quarters, an account of a disturbance which took place here on Sunday last, 22nd instant, I take advantage of Her Majesty's mail, by Marseilles, to make

you acquainted with the real circumstances of the case, which have been much misrepresented and exaggerated.

"I must first mention that the permission for holding the Carnival is always granted, under certain rules and regulations, by the Governor, through the head of the police, as the existing laws prohibit masking or masquerading in the public streets at any time.

"The license to hold the Carnival has hitherto been granted for Saturday, Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday preceding Ash Wednesday. Having understood, however, that the withholding license to mask in the public streets on Sunday (thereby restricting the permission for the Carnival to Saturday, Monday, and Tuesday) would be a measure most acceptable both to the Roman Catholic and Protestant Churches, and to all the most respectable portion of the community—Roman Catholics as well as Protestants—and being informed that the Carnival is not permitted in Rome on Sundays, I directed the head of the police to issue, on the 14th instant, the usual notice for holding it, but restricting it to Saturday, Monday, and Tuesday preceding Ash Wednesday—viz., 21st, 23rd, and 24th instant. After the notice was issued, I had no reason to believe, by the reports made to me by the head of the police, that the measure was obnoxious either to the lower or the higher classes of the community in town or country, with the exception of some idle, profligate young men about this town; nor were any petitions or representations to include the Sunday made to me by any parties, or from any quarter. Almost all the editors, however, of the Maltese press attacked the measure, asserting that doing away with the Carnival on Sunday was a despotic and illegal act on the part of the Government, and declaring it to be an act of Protestant oppression, and an interference with the Catholic religion. These misrepresentations, aided by some idle, discontented young men in the city, had the effect of causing a considerable crowd to assemble on Sunday in Valletta, who endeavoured to insult the Government, not by masking, but by dressing up some of their number like Protestant clergymen, and parading them with loud shouts and yelling about the streets around the Palace and near the Protestant church during divine service.

"I was determined to refrain from taking notice of this, as well as of other insulting acts, trusting the whole would go off quietly; and, with a view to this, I had previously ordered the police not to appear in the streets in greater numbers than usual, but to remain at their stations unless required, and not to interfere with any one who was not committing a breach of the peace.

"About sunset, however, after the drums of the 42nd regiment had beat the retreat, the mob collected round them; and, rushing on without the slightest provocation, assaulted them, and broke one of their drums and one of their pipes, following them as they retired towards their barrack with yells and screams. Seeing this assault take place myself under the window of the Palace, where I was standing, and as daylight was fast closing, I judged it was full time to put a stop to these proceedings. I therefore ordered the police to assemble and disperse those who,

in considerable numbers, were still yelling and cheering opposite the Main Guard and in front of the Palace. I also ordered two companies of the 42nd regiment to be ready to support the police in case they should be required; this, however, was not found to be necessary, as the police dispersed them without difficulty, having arrested about twenty-eight of those who were in the crowd, and who had refused to retire when ordered to do so. I may mention that the police, about fifty in number, had neither arms, batons, nor any other kind of weapon in their hands, and that I have not heard of any persons in the crowd having been injured. When brought before the magistrates the next morning, one of the rioters was sentenced to fifteen days' imprisonment, and two others were fined two dollars each, and, in default of payment, six days' imprisonment. The other prisoners were discharged.

"I trust it is scarcely necessary for me to deny (though I do so in the strongest manner) the assertion made in one of the newspapers, the *Mediterraneo* of the 25th instant, that I ordered two guns, which are always stationed at the gate of the Palace, to be got ready to fire on the people. The Carnival was carried on during the two following days, Monday and Tuesday, with the greatest good-humour, and without the slightest appearance of discontent.

"In all this business I believe the inhabitants of the island generally were indifferent and unconcerned, and but for the excitement of a few violent and ill-disposed persons in Valletta, I do not believe any disturbance would have happened; and I cannot forbear giving my testimony to the general good conduct, quiet deportment, and satisfactory feeling of the inhabitants at large towards the Government."

Extract from a Despatch addressed by GOVERNOR SIR P. STUART, G.C.M.G., *to the* RIGHT HONOURABLE W. E. GLADSTONE, M.P., *dated Malta, 5th March*, 1846.

"I think it my duty to mention to you that, since I had the honour of addressing you on the 27th ultimo, everything continues perfectly quiet here; and though the public press tries to raise an excitement by misrepresentations of what occurred on the 22nd February last, I am happy to say that neither in Valletta nor in the country do the people participate in it."

IV.

LIST OF BRITISH COMMISSIONERS AND GOVERNORS OF MALTA FROM 1800 TO 1870, WITH THE DATES OF SOME IMPORTANT EVENTS.

1798. June 12. Malta taken by General Buonaparte.
,, 18. Grand Master Hompesch leaves Malta.
Sept. 2. Revolution in the villages of Malta.
,, 18. Portuguese squadron in sight of Malta.

1798. October. Arrival of the British squadron under the command of Admiral Lord Nelson.

The squadron leaves Malta after twenty-four hours.

Return of the squadron. Captain A. J. Ball left in command of the blockade.

1799. Feb. 9. Sir Alexander John Ball made President of the Provisional Government.

1800. June 19. General Thomas Graham's address to the Maltese people.

Sept. 4. Capitulation between the General of Division, Vaubois, commanding-in-chief the Islands of Malta and Gozo, and Rear-Admiral Villeneuve, commanding the Marine at Malta, on the one part; and Major-General Pigot, commanding the troops of His Britannic Majesty and his Allies, and Captain Martin, commanding the vessels of His Britannic Majesty and his Allies, before Malta, on the other part.

1800. Sept. 8. Sir Alexander John Ball makes his solemn entry into Valletta.

1801. Feb. 20. Sir Alexander J. Ball leaves Malta, and Major-Gen. Pigot takes the command.

June 30. Arrival of Sir Charles Cameron as H.M.'s Civil Commissioner.

1802. July 24. Sir Charles Cameron leaves the island, and is succeeded by Sir Alexander J. Ball as H.M.'s Civil Commissioner.

1809. October. Death of Sir Alexander J. Ball, at St. Antonio.

1810. Lieut.-Gen. Sir Hildebrand Oakes appointed H.M.'s Civil Commissioner. His arrival.

1813. Oct. 4. Leaves Malta.

Oct. 5. Sir Thomas Maitland, having been appointed to be Governor and Commander-in-Chief of these islands, assumes the government thereof.

1815. June 27. Major-Gen. Layard assumes the government, as Lieut.-Governor, during Sir Thomas Maitland's temporary absence from the island.

Sept. 18. Return of Sir Thomas Maitland, and his resumption of the government.

Nov. 27. Major-Gen. Hutchinson assumes the government during the absence of Sir Thomas Maitland for a few days.

1816. Jan. 31. The Governor leaves the island, and directs that during his absence, and until the arrival of Major-Gen. Layard, Major-Gen. Hutchinson do act as Lieut.-Governor, and that Major-Gen. Layard do, on his arrival, assume the government of these possessions as Lieut.-Governor.

Feb. 19. Arrival of Major-Gen. Layard, and his assumption of the government.

1817. May 14. Return of Sir Thomas Maitland, and his resumption of the government.

June 26. Major-Gen. Layard assumes the government of these islands, as Lieut.-Governor, during the temporary absence of the Governor.

1817. Sept. 26. Return of Sir Thomas Maitland and his resumption of the government.
1818. Sept. 16. Ditto, ditto.
Dec. 2. Ditto, ditto.
1819. May 6. Major-Gen. Layard, Lieut.-Governor, leaves Malta, and Lieut.-Colonel Rey, R.A., assumes the government.
May 29. Return of Major-Gen. Layard, and his resumption of the government.
Oct. 4. Return of Sir Thomas Maitland, and his resumption of the government.
Oct. 12. Sir Thomas Maitland leaves the island, and Major-Gen. Sir Manley Power assumes the government as Lieut.-Governor during his temporary absence.
Oct. 16. Sir Manley Power leaves the island, and Col. James Maitland, Military Secretary to the Governor, assumes the government as Lieut.-Governor until further orders.
Dec. 18. Sir Manley Power returns to the island, and assumes the government of these possessions.
1820. Jan. 24. Return of Sir Thomas Maitland, and his resumption of the government.
Feb. Sir M. Power assumes the government as Lieut.-Governor.
Sept. 1. Return of Sir Thomas Maitland, and his resumption of the government.
Sept. 23. Sir Manley Power assumes the government.
1821. Sept. 14. Return of Sir Thomas Maitland, and his resumption of the government.
Oct. Sir Manley Power assumes the government.
Dec. 6. Return of Sir Thomas Maitland, and his resumption of the government.
1822. Feb. Sir Manley Power assumes the government.
May 17. Lieut.-Colonel Augustus Warburton, 85th Regt., assumes the government, as Lieut.-Governor, during the temporary absence of Sir Manley Power.
June 5. Col. Sir William Parker Carroll, C.B., 18th Regt., arrives in Malta, and as senior officer of H.M.'s troops, assumes the government of these possessions.
June 18. Return of Sir Manley Power, and his resumption of the government.
Oct. 30. Return of Sir Thomas Maitland, and his resumption of the government.
Nov. Sir Manley Power assumes the government.
1823. Feb. 5. Col. Sir William Parker Carroll, C.B., assumes the government during Sir Manley Power's absence on leave.
March 17. Return of Sir Thomas Maitland, and his resumption of the government.
April 4. Sir Thomas Maitland leaves the island, and Col. Sir William Parker Carroll, C.B., assumes the government as Lieut.-Governor of these possessions.

1823. June 20. Sir Manley Power's return, and his resumption of the government.

Nov. 2. Return of Sir Thomas Maitland, and his resumption of the government. Sir Manley Power assumes the government as Lieut.-Governor.

1824. Jan. 13. Return of Sir Thomas Maitland, and his resumption of the government.

Jan. 17. Death of Sir Thomas Maitland.

Jan. 18. Sir Manley Power assumes the government of these islands until H.M.'s pleasure be known.

June 7. General the Most Noble the Marquis of Hastings, K.G., G.C.B., G.C.H., assumes the duties of Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the island of Malta and its dependencies.

1825. April 27. Sir Manley Power assumes the government of these possessions during the temporary absence on leave of the Marquis of Hastings.

Dec. 1. Major-Gen. Alexander Woodford assumes the duties of Lieut.-Governor of these possessions in the absence of H.E. the Governor.

1826. March 31. Return of the Marquis of Hastings, and his resumption of the government.

Nov. 21. Major-Gen. Woodford assumes the duties of Lieut.-Governor during the absence of the Governor.

Nov. 28. Death of the Marquis of Hastings, in consequence of which event, Major-Gen. Woodford, as senior officer of H.M.'s troops and Lieut.-Governor, continues in the charge of the government of these possessions until the pleasure of H.M. be known.

1827. Feb. 15. Major-Gen. the Hon. Frederick Cavendish Ponsonby, C.B., appointed by H.M. Lieut.-Governor of this island and its dependencies, assumes the government of these possessions.

1830. June 1. Colonel Maurice Charles O'Connell, 73rd Regt., assumes the government as Acting Lieut.-Governor during the temporary absence of Major-Gen. Ponsonby.

June 19. Return of Major-Gen. Ponsonby, and his resumption of the government of these possessions.

1831. Feb. 2. Colonel Warburton assumes the government during the absence, for a few days, of Major-Gen. Ponsonby.

Feb. 9. Return of Major-Gen. Ponsonby, and his resumption of the government.

Aug. 1. Colonel Warburton assumes the government during the absence of Major-Gen. Ponsonby.

Oct. 22. Colonel Henry A. Morshead, senior officer of H.M.'s troops, assumes the government during the absence of Major-Gen. Ponsonby.

Nov. 12. Lieut.-Colonel Henry Balneavis, in consequence of the death of Colonel Morshead, assumes the government as the senior officer of H.M.'s troops.

1832. Jan. 10. Colonel George Brown, as the officer commanding H.M.'s troops, assumes the government of these possessions.

Feb. 14. Lieut.-Colonel the Hon. Sir Charles Gordon, Knt., as the officer commanding H.M.'s forces, assumes the government of these possessions.

Feb. 24. Colonel Sir Howard Elphinstone, Bart., as the officer commanding H.M.'s forces, assumes the government of these possessions.

March 5. Return of Sir Frederick C. Ponsonby, and his resumption of the government.

Dec. 9. Colonel Sir Howard Elphinstone, Bart., as the officer commanding H.M.'s forces in these islands, assumes the government during the temporary absence of Sir F. Ponsonby.

Dec. 23. Return of Sir F. Ponsonby, and his resumption of the government.

1834. May 28. Colonel Sir Howard Elphinstone, Bart., as the officer commanding H.M.'s forces, assumes the government of these possessions during the temporary absence of Sir F. Ponsonby.

Oct. 27. Return of Sir F. Ponsonby, and his resumption of the government.

1835. May 22. Lieut.-Colonel Balneavis, as the officer commanding H.M.'s forces, assumes the government of these possessions during the temporary absence of Sir F. Ponsonby.

July 8. Lieut.-Colonel George Cardew, as the officer commanding H.M.'s forces, assumes the government of these possessions.

1836. July 4. Colonel Thomas Evans, as the officer commanding H.M.'s troops in these islands, assumes the government as Acting Lieut.-Governor during the temporary absence of Sir F. Ponsonby.

Nov. 18. Sir Henry Frederick Bouverie assumes the government as Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the island of Malta and its dependencies.

1838. Dec. 22. Sir Henry F. Bouverie re-appointed to be, during H.M.'s pleasure, Governor and Commander-in-Chief of these islands.

1841. May 26. Colonel George Cardew, as the officer commanding H.M.'s troops in these islands, assumes the administration of the Civil Government during the temporary absence of the Governor.

Nov. 7. Return of Sir H. Bouverie, and his resumption of the government of these possessions.

1843. June 14. Minute by the Governor, announcing the appointment of Lieut.-Gen. the Hon. Patrick Stuart as Governor of these possessions.

June 15. Sir Henry F. Bouverie leaves the island.

June 15. The Hon. Colonel Balneavis, as the officer commanding H.M.'s troops in these islands, assumes the administration of the Civil Government until the arrival of the new Governor.

1843. July 13. The Hon. Patrick Stuart assumes the government.

1846. July 15. The Hon. Colonel Henry Balneavis, as the officer commanding H.M.'s troops in these islands, assumes the administration of the Civil Government during the temporary absence of Sir P. Stuart.

Nov. 15. Return of Sir P. Stuart, and his resumption of the government.

1841. July 24. Colonel Mildmay Fane, as the officer commanding H.M.'s troops in these islands, assumes the administration of the Civil Government on the departure of Sir P. Stuart, who had obtained permission to leave the island before the arrival of his successor in the government.

Dec. 18. The Right Hon. Richard More O'Ferrall assumes the administration of the Civil Government as Governor in and over the island of Malta and its dependencies.

1849. Aug. 25. The Hon. Colonel Rice Jones, as the officer commanding H.M.'s troops in these islands, assumes the administration of the Civil Government during the temporary absence of the Governor.

Oct. 26. The Hon. Lieut.-General Robert Ellice, as the officer in command of H.M.'s land forces in these islands, assumes the administration of the Civil Government during the temporary absence of the Governor.

Nov. 9. Return of Mr. R. More O'Ferrall, and his resumption of the government.

1851. May 13. Lieut.-General Robert Ellice, as the officer in command of H.M.'s land forces in these islands, assumes the administration of the Civil Government, on the departure of Mr. More O'Ferrall, who had obtained permission to leave the island before the arrival of his successor in the government.

Nov. 14. Sir William Reid assumes the government, as Governor and Commander-in-Chief in and over the island of Malta and its dependencies.

1857. July 27. The Hon. Lieut.-General Sir John Lysaght Pennefather, as the officer commanding H.M.'s land forces in these islands, assumes the administration of the Civil Government during the temporary absence of Sir William Reid.

Sept. 30. Return of Sir William Reid, and his resumption of the government.

1858. April 30. Sir John Gaspard Le Marchant assumes the government of these possessions as Governor and Commander-in-Chief in and over the island of Malta and its dependencies.

1860. May 24. The Hon. Major-Gen. Charles Warren, as the officer commanding H.M.'s troops in these islands, assumes the administration of the government during the temporary absence of Sir John Gaspard Le Marchant.

July 2. Return of Sir John G. Le Marchant, and his resumption of the government.

1863. July 31. Brigadier-Gen. Mark K. Atherley, as the officer commanding H.M.'s troops in these islands, assumes the administration of the government during the temporary absence of Sir John G. Le Marchant.

Aug. 29. Return of Sir John G. Le Marchant, and his resumption of the government.

1864. Nov. 4. Major-Gen. W. J. Ridley, as the officer commanding H.M.'s troops, assumes the administration of the islands on the departure from Malta of Sir John G. Le Marchant.

Nov. 30. Sir Henry K. Storks, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., assumes the government as Governor and Commander-in-Chief in and over Malta and its dependencies.

1865. Dec. 7. Major-Gen. Ridley again assumes the command during the temporary absence of Sir Henry Storks in Jamaica.

1866. Dec. 22. Return of Sir Henry Storks and his resumption of the government.

1867. April 18. Major-Gen. Ridley again appointed to the supreme command on the departure from Malta of Sir Henry Storks.

May 15. Lieut.-General Sir Patrick Grant, G.C.B., assumes the government as Governor and Commander-in-Chief of Malta and its dependencies.

TRIAL BY JURY.

1829. Oct. 15. Constitution of a court, by the style and title of the "Court of Special Commission," for the establishment of a modified trial by jury in certain criminal cases.

1845. Jan. 15. Jurisdiction of the said court extended.

1854. June 10. The said court suppressed, on the promulgation of the new criminal code, in which it is provided that "Her Majesty's Criminal Court shall sit with a jury for the trial of every offence punishable according to the law in the island of Malta and its dependencies," with the exception of contraventions which are within the competence of the Police Court.

COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENT.

1835. May 1. Proclamation by his Excellency the Hon. Sir Frederick Cavendish Ponsonby, G.C.M.G., G.C.B., notifying the creation and establishment of a Council of Government within these possessions.

1849. June 23. Government notice, publishing H.M.'s letters-patent granting the constitution of a new Council of Government in these possessions.

COMMISSIONERS OF INQUIRY.

1836. Oct. 25. Minute of the Acting Lieut.-Governor (Colonel Thomas Evans) announcing the arrival of John Austin, Esq., and George Cornewall Lewis, Esq., H.M.'s Commissioners of Inquiry into the affairs of Malta, and publishing H.M.'s Commission.

LIBERTY OF THE PRESS.

1839. March 15. Proclamation by his Excellency Sir Henry F. Bouverie, G.C.M.G., K.C.B., promulgating "An Ordinance enacted by the Governor of Malta, with the advice and consent of the Council of Government thereof, for abolishing the Censorship, and for providing against abuses of the consequent liberty of publishing printed writings."

V.

Population of Malta and Gozo.

According to the last census of these islands, taken in 1861, the population of Malta, on the 31st October of that year, consisted of 118,596 persons, namely, 58,782 males, and 59,814 females. Of these, 116,207 are Maltese, 1,263 English (exclusive of the garrison and Her Majesty's navy), and 1,126 foreigners. The population of Gozo and Comino amounted to 15,495 individuals, namely, 7,448 males and 8,047 females, of whom 15,440 are Maltese, 11 English, and 8 foreigners, making together, for Malta and Gozo (including Comino), 134,091 souls in all. The inhabitants of the city of Valletta and its suburb, including 1,169 individuals composing the crews of native vessels absent, amount to 33,033; that is, 8,612 individuals over and above the population of the three cities—Vittoriosa, Cospicua, and Senglea—situated on the other side of the Great Harbour, which three latter cities collectively give a population of 24,421 souls. The most populous districts of the country of Malta are the seventh and the third, each numbering a population of upwards of 11,000 inhabitants.

The area of Malta is 95 statute square miles, with a population of 1,248$\frac{3}{4}$ to the square mile. The area of Gozo, including Comino, consists of 20 statute square miles, with a population of 722$\frac{1}{2}$ to the square mile. To convey a more exact idea of the density of the population of Malta (Gozo excepted), it will suffice to state that about one-third part of the above-mentioned 95 square miles of surface (*i.e.*, 31$\frac{3}{4}$ square miles) is barren rock, independently of the sites built on; and consequently only two-thirds of it, namely, 63$\frac{1}{4}$ square miles, are capable of cultivation. Calculating the amount of population to the said number of miles of cultivated surface, and taking no notice of the sites built on, the proportion would in reality be 1,872$\frac{3}{4}$ persons to the square mile.

VI.

Revenue and Expenditure of Malta.

In 1868 the gross revenue derived from rents of Crown property, duties on imports, store rent for goods in bond, tonnage dues, fees, licenses, &c., amounted to £166,782.

The following is an estimate of the sums required to defray the expenditure of Malta for the year 1868, and the amount actually expended under the corresponding heads in 1866 :—

	Estimate for 1868. £	s.	d.	Expenditure for 1866. £	s.	d.
Government Establishments	68,702	13	0	67,066	15	11
Pensions, Retired Allowances, and Gratuities	13,716	0	0	12,144	1	11
Revenue Services *	718	0	0	16,244	2	5
Administration of Justice*	1,460	0	0	1,466	3	10
Ecclesiastical *	214	0	0	216	19	1
Charitable Allowances *	3,726	0	0	4,188	17	11
Education *	688	0	0	671	10	2
Hospitals *	13,762	0	0	13,043	2	8
Police and Gaols *	3,139	0	0	3,180	0	0
Rent	477	0	0	461	9	9
Transport	513	0	0	674	9	4
Conveyance of Mails	369	0	0	548	12	7
Works and Buildings	6,413	0	0	29,003	14	1
Roads, Streets, and Bridges	14,014	0	0	16,375	11	7
Miscellaneous Services	624	0	0	1,196	18	0
Interest	3,761	0	0	3,895	6	2
Contribution towards Military Expenditure	6,200	0	0	6,200	0	0
Burdens on Property	1,729	0	0	1,693	14	9
Drawbacks and Refund of Duties	6,304	0	0	6,674	2	1
Council of Government	143	0	0	112	18	3
Special Services under direction of Secretary of State	1,000	0	0	390	18	0
	£147,672	13	0	£185,449	8	6

Malta Government Gazette.

* In addition to what is expended for these purposes under the head of Establishments.

VII.

NEWSPAPERS PUBLISHED IN MALTA.

In English	Malta Government Gazette.
	Malta Times.
	Malta Observer.
In Italian	Portafoglio Maltese.
	Lloyd Maltese.
	Corriere Mercantile.
	Ordine e Religione.
	Stenterello.
In English and Italian	Il Mediterraneo.
In Maltese	Il Malti.

NEWSPAPERS FORMERLY PUBLISHED.

In English	Malta Mail.
	Beacon.
	Malta Penny Magazine (Illustrated).
	Mediterranean Magazine ,,
	Harlequin.
	Malta Chronicle.
In Italian	Il Filantropo.

VIII.

NOBILITY OF MALTA.

ALESSI, Marquis Bernardo, of Tiflia, title granted on November 13, 1790, by Grand Master Rohan.

APAP, Marquis Filippo, LL.D., of Gnein Issultan, December 6, 1792, by Rohan.

Apap, Marchesino Felicissimo.

AZZOPARDI (Zammit), Baron Calcedonio, of Buleben, July 26, 1770, by Rohan.

BARBARO, Marquis Gustavo, of San Giorgio, June 25, 1792, by Rohan.

Barbaro, Arturo de' Marchesi.

Barbaro, Ramiro de' Marchesi.

CIANTAR, Baron and Count Serafino, of San Giovanni, August 20, 1657, by De Redin, and July 20, 1777, by Rohan.

Ciantar, Giuseppe de' Conti.

DAMICO INQUANEZ, Baroness Teresa, of Bucana and Diar el Bniet, by King Ferdinand, November 13, 1732.

DAMICO, Baron Alessandro Sceberras (eldest son of Baron P. Sceberras Trigona).

DELICATA, Marquis Gaetano, LL.D., of Ghain Kajet, June 4, 1797, by Rohan.

Delicata, Giuseppe de' Marchesi, LL.D.

DE PIRO, Baron Sir Giuseppe M., G.C.M.G., of Budac, April 23, 1716, by Perellos.

DEPIRO, Marquis Saverio, Capt. R.M.F.A., November 6, 1742, by Philip V. of Spain.

Depiro Gurgion, Carmelo de' Marchesi.

FONTANI, Count Luigi della Senia, June 6, 1795, by Rohan, Kt. 1st Class Charles III. by Isabella II. of Spain.

Fontani Manduca, Contino Vincenzo.

FORMOSA, Count Saverio, of Santa Sofia.

Formosa Montalto, Salvatore de' Conti.

Formosa Montalto, Ferdinando de' Conti.

GALEA, Baron Pietro Paolo, of San Marciano, July 14, 1726, by Manoel.

Galea, Very Rev. Dr. D. Michel' Angelo de' Baroni, Archdeacon of the Cathedral Church.

Galea, Calcedonio de' Baroni.

GATTO, Count Niccolò, LL.D., of Beuarrat, October 23, 1773, by Rohan.

GAUCI BONICI, Baron Hon. Francesco, Member of Council for Gozo, of Taffia, December 23, by Rohan.

Gauci Testaferrata, Francesco de' Baroni.

MALLIA, Marquis Gio. Antonio, of Fiddeni, October 5, 1785, by Rohan.

Mallia, Marchesino Salvatore.

Mallia, Emilio de' Marchesi.

MANDUCA PISCOPO MACEDONIA, Count Monsignor D. Salvatore, Canon of the Cathedral Church, July 10, 1820, by Grand Duke of Parma.

Manduca, Don Carmelo de' Conti.

Manduca, Francesco de' Conti.

Manduca, Dr. Don Giuseppe de' Conti.

Manduca, Luigi de' Conti.

Manduca, Pasquale de' Conti.

Manduca, Saverio de' Conti.

PREZIOSI, Count Gio. Francesco, October 16, 1777, by Vittorio Amadeo of Savoy.

Preziosi, Giuseppe de' Conti, LL.D., Syndic of 2nd District.

Preziosi, Alessandro de' Conti.

Preziosi, Antonio de' Conti, M.D.

Preziosi, Don Luigi de' Conti.

SANT CASSIA, Count Luigi, Baron of Ghariesciem and Tabia, C.M.G. (lately deceased). He is succeeded by his only son, Francesco (the first-born of the elder branch of the family), in his title of Count, granted by Maria Theresa of Austria, as per diploma of the 22nd December, 1770, as well as in his title of Baron of

Ghariesciem and Tabia, granted by King Ferdinand of Sicily on the 13th November, 1372, and by Lascaris on the 24th April, 1638.

N.B.—According to the diploma of Maria Theresa of Austria, dated 22nd December, 1770, the title of Count Sant is granted solely to the first-born of the family, and therefore the present Count Francesco Sant, Baron Cassia, as first-born of the elder branch of the family, protests against any one of the family holding the title of Count Sant, he being the only one who has a right to that title.

SANT FOURNIER, Count Lazzaro, January 20, 1774, by Maria Theresa of Austria.

Sant, Francesco de' Conti.

Sant, Francesco Saverio de' Conti.

Sant, Giuseppe C. de' Conti.

Sant, Giorgio de' Conti, LL.D.

SCEBERRAS BOLOGNA, Count Nicolò, C.M.G., of La Catena, January 20, 1745, by Pinto.

SCEBERRAS TESTAFERRATA TRIGONA, Baron Pasquale, C.M.G., of Ciciano, July 11, 1695, by Charles II. of Sicily, and by another grant Baron of La Marsa, June 12, 1725, by Manoel.

STAGNO, Count Giuseppe, of Bahria, May 16, 1743.

Stagno Navarra, Manfredi de' Conti.

TESTAFERRATA ABELA, Baron Augusto, of Gommerino, December 24, 1710, by Percllos; June 17, 1820, by Ferdinand II. of Sicily.

Testaferrata Abela, Ettore de' Baroni.

Testaferrata Abela, Baron Giuseppe.

TESTAFERRATA VIANI, Marquis Giuseppe, LL.D., of Tabia, December 11, 1728, by Manoel.

TESTAFERRATA DE NOTO, Emmanuele, Marquis of S. Vincenzo Ferreri, November 10, 1716, by Philip of Naples, and by a second grant, July 13, 1717, by Amadeo of Savoy.

TESTAFERRATA, Marquis Mario Filippo, by Vittorio Amadeo of Sicily, July 13, 1747; Knight of the Holy Roman Empire, November 8, 1631, by Ferdinand III. of Germany.

TESTAFERRATA CASTELLETTI, Marquis Giuseppe, by Vittorio Amadeo of Sicily, July 13, 1717, Knight of the Holy Roman Empire.

TESTAFERRATA OLIVIER, Marquis Gio. Paolo, November 1651, by Ferdinand III. of Germany, and July 13, 1717, by Vittorio Amadeo of Savoy, Knight of the Holy Roman Empire.

TESTAFERRATA DESAIN, Marquis Riccardo, November 6, 1631, by Ferdinand III. of Germany, and July 13, 1717, by Vittorio Amadeo of Sicily, Knight of the Holy Roman Empire.

IX.

Mr. Bateman's Report to the Duke of Buckingham.

16, *Great George Street, Westminster, May* 11, 1867.

"To His Grace the Duke of Buckingham and Chandos,

"My Lord Duke,

"Since I wrote the short Report which I addressed to your Grace on the 29th March last, I have, in accordance with the instructions I had the honour of receiving, visited the island of Malta for the purpose of examining upon the spot the best means by which the island could be relieved from its present scarcity of water.

"This visit has cleared up the only point on which I was left in doubt after studying the Ordnance geological maps and the pamphlet of Captain Spratt on the Geology of Malta.

"I am now perfectly satisfied that an abundant supply of good fresh water can be obtained by sinking one or more large shafts or wells to about the level of the sea in any convenient position near the centre of the island, and by raising the water thus found by steam power to the requisite elevation.

"The island of Malta consists almost entirely of porous rocks, only thinly and partially covered by vegetable soil. These rocks are divided into two series by an intervening bed of marl of no great thickness, but which lies generally at an elevation of 400 or 500 feet above the sea. The rocks superincumbent upon this marl rise into hills of 700 or 800 feet above sea-level, and form the highest portion of the island. They vary in character from a compact crystalline limestone to a very porous calcareous sandstone. These upper rocks are depressed to nearly sea-level in the northerly portion of the island by a 'fault' which traverses the island from west to east. The elevated portion of the rocks include an area of 5,000 or 6,000 acres, and it is from this district that the supplies of water which are collected and brought to Valletta, Floriana, the 'Three Cities,' and the villages on the way are obtained. The water permeating the porous strata descends to the marl, and is thrown out in springs which issue along the upper edge of the marl where it is exposed on the slopes or sides of the hills. Acting on the knowledge of this fact, the water has been collected to a considerable extent by shafts sunk to the surface of the marl, and by headings or underground conduits, and attempts are now being made for obtaining an additional supply by the adoption of the same means. The only effect of these operations is to catch a portion of the water before it would naturally have issued as springs.

"The water thus collected is conveyed to Floriana and Valletta by the Vignacourt Aqueduct, and to the three cities by the Fauara Aqueduct. These aqueducts are both on a small scale, and only capable of conveying a limited quantity of water.

"The lower series, which lie below the marl, occupy by far the larger portion of the island. The rocks are very similar in character to those which lie above the marl.

"The whole thickness down to the semi-crystalline limestone referred to by Captain Spratt in his memoir, and which generally forms the base of the rocks, is perfectly permeable. The crystalline limestone, which may be considered an impervious rock, is so depressed in the neighbourhood of Valletta and in the south-easterly portion of the island, and also apparently in the centre of the island about Curmi, that it lies below the level of the sea. Various wells sunk in the neighbourhood of Curmi obtain water about sea-level, and in the excavations for the new harbour works, and all the other excavations which have been made in the neighbourhood of Valletta, not a drop of water is found until the excavations reach sea-level, or nearly so. Below this level the rocks must, of course, be perfectly saturated with water. The whole island, so far as it consists of porous material, is one great reservoir, receiving its supplies from the rain which falls upon the surface.

"I carefully considered the possibility of collecting the surface water and impounding it in store reservoirs, for use during seasons of drought. The river courses afford evidence of occasional heavy floods, but so much of the exposed surface consists of absorbent rock and sand, that a small portion only of the rain-fall can be calculated upon as flowing off the ground. It is the surplus or flood waters only which could be impounded in reservoirs.

"The country is unfavourable for the construction of works of this description. Except in one limited case, near the further extremity of the Vignacourt Aqueduct, the water-tight stratum of marl does not form the bottom of the valley; it lies generally upon the slopes of the hills, the valleys themselves being almost in all cases cut through to the absorbent measures beneath. Even in the one instance referred to the valley is below the level of the aqueduct, and therefore no water-tight basins can be found at desirable elevations, nor indeed at any elevation, for the construction of reservoirs for the collection of the surplus water of one season to meet the exigencies and wants of another. This will easily be shown if we consider the amount of storage which will be required.

"The population of Valletta, Floriana, and the Three Cities, according to the information laid before me, is 57,454; of military there are about 5,000; and naval, about 4,300; making a total of 66,754—say, in round numbers, 70,000 persons. It is difficult to determine what quantity of water ought to be provided for this population. The native lower orders use little; the usual allowance, I believe, to soldiers and sailors on land is 7 gallons per head per day, to which must be added the various public wants of a city, watering of streets, washing of clothes and houses, gardens, public fountains, water-closets, and other things, all which, in a hot country, ought to make a considerable addition. In Great Britain, for such a population, the lowest allowance would be 20 gallons per head per day; in a hotter country 30 gallons should be provided; but, considering the character of the inhabitants and other circumstances, it

may be sufficient to calculate upon 10 gallons per head per day only for the population of Malta.

"This would make the total daily quantity for Valletta, Floriana, and the Three Cities 700,000 gallons per day.

"The cities are now supplied principally by the two aqueducts already described, the larger of which, the Vignacourt Aqueduct, is stated to bring to Valletta and Floriana 100,800 gallons per day on the average; and the smaller, the Fauara Aqueduct, is stated to bring to the Three Cities an average daily supply of 57,600 gallons, being together 158,400 gallons per day. At present these aqueducts are not yielding half of this quantity, or not more than one gallon per head per day.

"In addition to the water brought into the cities by aqueduct, the rain-water which falls upon the roofs of the houses is to a great extent collected and impounded; but if every drop of water which falls upon the roofs and upon other surfaces from which it can be collected were impounded and utilised, the whole quantity in a dry year would not amount to one gallon per head per day on the average of the year. The deficiency may, therefore, be taken as at least 500,000 gallons per day.

"I have before me the returns of the rain-fall during the fifteen years which have elapsed since the year 1851, with the exception of 1860, 1861, and 1862. The average rain is 24·23 inches per annum; but the average must not be taken. In the twelve years there are three in which the rain was as follows:—In 1852, 8·27 inches; in 1855, 15·7; in 1866, 10·49; and up to the 16th April the quantity which had fallen in this year was but 2·36 inches.

"In such years no supply by collection of surface water could be depended upon—nearly the whole quantity, if not the whole, would be taken up by vegetation, or be absorbed or evaporated. Even in years of average rain, such as 1863, 1864, 1865, of which I have been favoured with the monthly returns, I find that for six or seven months together the rain is so small in quantity that no water, except it were the result of an occasional thunder-storm, would flow off the ground for collection in reservoirs. As a general rule there seems to be no available rain from March to September, both inclusive. If water, therefore, has to be collected from the surface in wet seasons, and stored in reservoirs for use in dry seasons, the reservoirs should contain at least 250 days' supply. At 500,000 gallons a day this would involve a total storage of 125,000,000 gallons, or 20,000,000 cubic feet. To make covered tanks to hold this quantity would be out of the question on account of the cost. If formed as open reservoirs, they must be in all cases 20 feet in depth, in order to prevent vegetation; they must be made water-tight by artificial means, and, in addition to the capacity required, about one-seventh must be added for the enormous evaporation from the water surface which takes place in Malta. In addition to the reservoirs, even could they be constructed, catch-water drains to collect the water which flows from the surface must also be formed, and a new aqueduct to convey the water to the cities. The country does not afford facilities for the construction of works of this magnitude at a reasonable cost, and

anything on a smaller scale would lead to disappointment. The cheaper, shorter, and more certain way is to sink for water in the porous strata about the centre of the island, from which, as I have already observed, an almost unlimited quantity may be extracted.

"In illustration of the soundness of this view I may mention the case of the Wirral Promontory in the county of Chester, in this country, which lies between the river Mersey on the one side and the river Dee upon the other, having a length between these rivers of twelve miles, by a breadth of about six miles. The strata of rocks consist of the 'new red sandstone' formation, being in lithological character and in porosity very similar to the rocks at Malta. It is, however, much more severely fractured, the fractures being, so far as I have been able to ascertain, of a more open and broken character. From the water which is found in this formation, at and below the level of the sea, the towns of Birkenhead, Wallasey, Tranmere, and other places are supplied from five wells within an area of about two square miles. About 4,000,000 gallons of water per day are extracted and supplied to the inhabitants. One well lies almost close up to the shore, another within three-quarters of a mile, a third about a mile, and the furthest little more than two miles from salt water; yet the water in all cases is perfectly sweet and fresh. Another remarkable circumstance is that four of these wells have been sunk, within the last four or five years, in close proximity to a well which had existed for many years previously; and though they all appear to be extracting water from the same water-bearing stratum, the quantity supplied by the first well has been to no extent diminished. No doubt the surface water percolating the rocks supplies the wells, but it can hardly be supposed that five wells, pumping from the same stratum within so short a distance of each other, could continue operations without interfering with the supply to the well which had originally all the stratum to itself, unless the sea, filtering through the intermediate mass of sandstone, and deprived by filtration of its saline qualities, provided an inexhaustible supply to the wells.

"In the same way the town of Liverpool, on the opposite shore of the river Mersey, has for years obtained large supplies of water. Here the wells for the most part lie within one mile, or a mile and a half from the sea-shore, and though they have been in use for thirty or forty years, most of them still continue to yield a large supply of pure fresh water. In some cases, however, from too close proximity to the sea of some of the wells, and from over-pumping, the water becomes saline, and the wells have had to be abandoned.

"It is very evident, I think, from these instances, that an abundant supply of pure fresh water can be obtained in Malta by adopting the same system which has been so perfectly successful at Birkenhead and Liverpool. With this view, I would recommend the construction of a well or shaft of considerable size—say 12 feet by 6 feet—a little to the north-west of Curmi, probably about the position of Mr. Scerri's property, which it has been proposed to purchase, with the erection of a steam-engine and pumps equal to the raising of 500,000 gallons of water per

day. A well in this position would be one and a half miles distant from salt water. The water, when raised to the surface, might be lifted into the Vignacourt Aqueduct, from which the well will be distant about one and a half miles; or more conveniently and advantageously forced through pipes directly to Floriana and Valletta, a distance of about two and a half miles, and by a branch pipe of about two miles in length to the Three Cities, on the opposite side of the Great Harbour.

"The Vignacourt Aqueduct is too small in size to convey any material additional quantity of water.

"The cost of a shaft such as described, and of the necessary steam-engines and pumps, with piping to Floriana, Valletta, and to the Three Cities, will be about £14,000; and, if orders for their construction were immediately given, it is possible that the whole work might be completed and water supplied by the autumn of this year. The annual cost of pumping, if the engine worked day and night constantly through the year, including coals, wages, and stores, would be about £1,200.

"I have, &c.,

(Signed) "JOHN FRED. BATEMAN.

"P.S.—In this estimate I have not supposed any change in the existing system of supply within the cities.

X.

NOTES ON THE GEOLOGY, BOTANY, AND NATURAL HISTORY OF MALTA,

GEOLOGY.

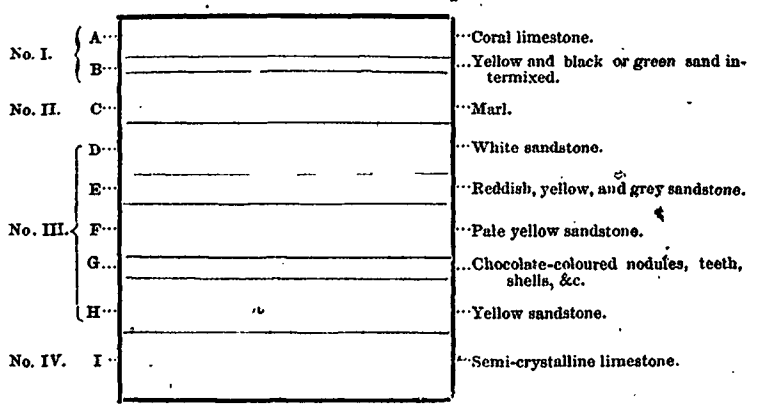
THE Maltese islands are situated near the centre of the Mediterranean basin. Their geology, which was formerly considered to belong to the Miocene epoch, has, through the researches of the late Professor E. Forbes, been transferred to a late Eocene epoch. The islands consist of a small fragment of what was probably a chain, more or less interrupted, of peninsulas or islands at the dawn of the tertiary period. The nearest shores of the African continent, as at Tripoli, correspond to the Malta formation, as do also the southern shores of France, from Marseilles for some miles eastward, where the same order of superposition obtains, the various beds attaining in many places a thickness far beyond that observable in Malta or Gozo.

Subterranean action has evidently been active since the upheaval of the Eocene strata of this region, and one or two links only remain of any lands of this period that may have existed, intermediate between the terminals of the beds in South Europe and North Africa.

I once visited Cagliari, in the south-east of Sardinia, for a few hours, and in a hasty ramble on shore came upon rocks which I concluded to be identical with the Malta sandstones; but this observation requires verification. The only other existing link open to our researches is the

Maltese group, a small fragment truly, but an interesting one, and one which will well repay any labours in the exhumation of its varied fossil productions.

Through the kindness of Captain Spratt, C.B., R.N., I am enabled to give a table of the different beds of the group, with some extracts from his valuable treatise on the Geology of Malta, to which I must refer my readers for fuller information than I have space for here:—



The general dip of the strata is from W.S.W. to E.N.E., so that the lower beds are chiefly exposed on the cliffs to the south and south-east. This holds good for all the eastern parts of Malta and western parts of Gozo. The intermediate section, including Comino, is depressed between faults to a depth of about 400 feet, which has brought the marl (No. II.) into juxtaposition with the crystalline limestone (No. IV.). This may be well observed at Fomm er rih (mouth of the wind), on the coast, at the south-western end of the Giannèina Valley; and taking this as a point of departure, and proceeding inland in a north-easterly direction (or at right angles to the axis of the islands as marked by the Bengemma Hills), the whole course of the eastern limits of the fault may be well traced, as it cuts the island with an almost uniform regularity in a straight line, the chief exception to this being where a promontory of hill breaks out off the main line of the Naxiar ridge at the Hermitage of St. Paul, not far from the village of Musta. The north-easterly termination of this line is at Maddeleina, where a bluff of crystalline limestone and sandstone (Nos. III. and IV.) rises almost precipitously from the plain below.

To the existence of this fault is due one of the most picturesque features of Malta. Often on a fine spring morning have I stood on the ridge of the Naxiar heights, the whole plain below glowing with the blossom of the purple *sulla*,* the inlets of the bays of the Salini, St. Paul's, and Straights of Freghi reposing like gems of deepest blue in their setting of white rock, which the sun irradiated into a perfectly dazzling lustre,

* A kind of clover (*Hedysarum coronarium*).

enjoying the first cool breath of the *maestrale*, as it dimpled the azure of the lazy deep, and mapping out the course of present or future excursion with gun, hammer, or botanical box.

The western boundary of the fault must be sought in Gozo, where it follows a course from Silech Bay, on the north-east, passing between Fort Chambray and Nadùr to the Valley of Ghain Sèlim, on the south.

Besides this main fault, there are several minor dislocations, as at Selmòne Island, and at Melleha, close to the Torre Rosso, which will be easily traced by the geological rambler. The basin at Maklùba (from *maklùb*, overturned) is another instance of a local depression on a small scale. Let us take a cursory glance at the different strata, with their fossils.

Beginning with the coral limestone (No. I.), we find this formation in many places capping a stratum of marl (No. II.), especially along the crest of the Bengemma Hills in Malta, and on the flat tops of most of the conical hills of Gozo. Within the depression of the great fault we find it also frequently, as on the summits of most of the cliffs between Fommer-rih and Marfa, at Wardia, St. Paul's Bay on the west side, at Melleha, and in other spots. The presence of the underlying clay will always indicate this bed truly. The rock of which it is composed varies much in character. In some places it is chalky and soft; in others, consisting in great part of coral, it is very friable; whilst occasionally it is hard, compact, and semi-crystalline.

It abounds in fossils belonging to the genera (as determined by Professor E. Forbes) *Spondylus*, *Ostrea*, *Pecten*, *Cytherœa* (?), *Arca*, *Terebratula*, *Orthis*, and *Clavagella* (?), amongst the Mollusca; of the Echinodermata, *Echinus*, *Cidaris*, *Nucleolites*, *Brissus*, and *Spatangus*; with some remains of sea-weeds, *Nullipora*, *Crustacea*, and *Foraminifera*.

In the marl (No. II.), which attains in some places a thickness of, perhaps, a hundred feet, a few organic remains occur, most of which serve as nuclei to nodules of iron pyrites, so that the fossils themselves are undistinguishable. Here may be found occasionally a small interesting species, the Nautilus Zigzag, discovered first in Malta by Captain Spratt, and known before only as occurring in the clays of the London and Paris basins; therefore an Eocene fossil.

In nearly every instance the marl is found, of variable thickness, underlying the coral limestone, but separated from it by a thin band of yellow or green sand, with black granules, with numerous shells of *Lenticulites complanatus*, allied to the Nummulite, teeth and vertebræ of fish of the family *Squalidæ*, and occasionally also of *Cetacea*. Below the marl we come to the most largely-developed bed of the island, the sandstone (No. III.), divided by Captain Spratt into five distinct strata with special characteristics.

Of one or another section of this formation consists the main portion of the island of Malta eastward of the Naxiar ridge, and north-east of the Bengemma and Città Vecchia range; comprising, therefore, Valletta, with the villages of Zurrìq, 'Mkàbba, Lùca, Asciàk, Zeitùn, Zabbàr, Cùrmi, Bircharchàra, Attàrd, Mùsta, Naxiàr, Gharghùr, &c.

These portions assume generally the form of an undulating plain, intersected by occasional ravines and rocky valleys, which have, no doubt, been excavated during the rising of the land from the bed of the ocean, a continuation of the agency which denuded this stratum of the superincumbent deposits, the marl and coral limestone, of which but fragments now remain, isolated on the hill summits. The importance of these fragments has been pointed out by Captain Spratt, who has shown that to the presence of the porous coral limestone, with the impermeable marl below, are due the springs which in great measure supply the islands with fresh water. Vignacourt's aqueduct is fed from two of these. Others fertilise the valleys of 'Mtàhleb (milking-place), Boschetto, Fauàra (source of running water), and others. The sandstone in many places abounds in fossils.

In Bed D. *Vaginula depressa* (Daudin); *Crystallaria*, sp.; *Nodosaria*, sp.

In Bed F. *Brissus*, 2 sp.; *Nucleolites*, sp.

In Beds G and H. *Pecten burdigallensis; Scalaria*, sp.; *Scutella subrotunda; Spatangus*, sp.; *Brissus*, 2 sp.

In Bed H. *Nautilus*, sp.

In H and I. *Pecten;* casts of *Lucina, Solarium, Conus, Phorus, Natica*, and *Cyprœa; Balanus stellaris* (Procchi)? *Scutella subrotunda; Clypeaster*, sp.; *Brissus*, 2 sp.; *Nucleolites; Cidaris.*

Common to Beds C, D, E, F, G. *Ostrea navicularis, Pecten cristatus*, casts of *Conus* and *Natica*, and *Cyprœa, Spatangus*, and *Brissus*, 2 sp.

The lowest stratum (No. IV.) consists chiefly of an indurated semi-crystalline limestone. This forms the whole of the base of the cliffs on the south of Malta, from Marsascirocco to the fault at Fomm-er-rih, as well as the cliffs of the south of Gozo, where it attains an almost perpendicular height of four hundred feet above the sea-level. Dipping to the E.N.E. it is below the sea-level on the north-east shores of the islands, but it crops out at Dragonara Point, the eastern boundary of St. George's Bay, and thence forms the whole of the low shelving shore as far as Maddeleina, where the fault has submerged it.

The map and diagrams attached to Captain Spratt's work will at once explain the features of the Malta deposits; and to his work, with the map of the Earl of Ducie and Dr. Adams's papers on the drift and cave deposits, I must refer those who would fill up the brief outline which I have here sketched.

It is only of late years that the interesting geological question of the bone caves has been investigated. Their organic remains belong to an age long subsequent to the consolidation and upheaval of the Malta strata, and are very probably post-tertiary. To a non-geologist their contents would appear somewhat startling; for the able palæontologist, the late Dr. Falconer, has determined that the exhumed teeth belonged to a species of hippopotamus, and to two species of elephant, all now extinct on the globe.

"What! elephants and hippopotami in Malta?" has been an ejaculation which must have greeted not seldom the ears of those who first announced the facts. Even so; but it must be remembered that during

the period when the leviathans of the land and river wandered in these regions, Malta was, in all probability, connected with the African shore, or separated merely by a narrow strait of fresh or brackish water. Modern research has established the more than probability that in ages gone by the basin now occupied by the Mediterranean consisted of a chain of fresh-water or brackish lakes, with lands then above the level of the water which are now submerged. I would point to an interesting map by Captain Spratt, at p. 292 of the *Proceedings of the Geological Society* for 1867, in which the submarine connections of Malta with Sicily, and with the Barbary coast, will explain how little the configuration of the existing coasts may have accorded with that of a past epoch. In this map it will be seen that an upheaval of two hundred and fifty fathoms would entirely connect the African shore with Italy, except only two very narrow channels through the *Medina* and *Adventure* banks, with a lake between them; so that the whole eastern part of the Mediterranean would become an isolated basin, as the Black Sea is at the present day. The channels, with lake between, would then be analogous to the Bosphorus and Dardanelles with the Sea of Marmora.

In an appendix to Captain Spratt's work on Crete * will be found a long and interesting disquisition on the subject of lacustrine and fluviatile deposits in the Mediterranean, in which he advocates the lake theory, and proves a wide-spread agency of fresh water in regions now submitted to oceanic influences.

Space forbids my now pursuing further the subject of geology. With help from the sources I have named, the student will have no difficulty in filling up the necessarily faintly-traced outline which I have given above.

BOTANY.

[For the sake of brevity I have adopted the following abbreviations: v.c., very common; c., common; f., frequent; o., occasional; r., rare; v.r., very rare.]

The marine flora of Malta has received, I believe, but little attention, nor am I aware of any authentically-named collection of the Algæ of its shores. Some years ago (in 1851), in company with a friend, Dr. Vernon Seddall, I made an exploration of the harbours and bays from Valletta to St. George's, for the purpose of forming a collection of sea-weeds. These I brought to England, and submitted them to the late Mrs. Griffiths, of Torquay. Most of the species were unknown to her, but the few which she named I give:—

Porphyra laciniata, the edible laver, I found but on one occasion, growing near the point of Fort Manoel Island.

Codium tomentosum. A coarse species, common in the harbours and muddy bays.

Padina pavonia. Very common in various places in the harbours in shallow water, attaining four inches, or even more, in diameter.

Ulva latissima (?). A broad light-green frond, common on the quays and on stones in shallow water. A useful species for the aquarium.

* "Travels and Researches in Crete," by Captain Spratt, R.N. Van Vourst, 1865.

Ulva Linza (?). A delicate, thin, narrow, wavy frond. Common.
Haliseris polypodioides. A very common species on rocks.
Laurencia obtusa. A delicate rhodosperm, common in harbours.
Enteromorpha.
Cladophora.
Ceramium.
Polysiphonia.
Sargassum bacciferum. The well-known gulf-weed, frequently washed up in the bays, transported by westerly winds and currents from the Atlantic.
Zostera marina inhabits the muddy parts of the harbours and many of the bays, forming dense beds. The fibres of its roots are rolled by the sea into small compact balls like grape shot, and cast on shore in numbers. The weed itself is used as a dressing for fields.

Many other species are found, some of them of great beauty, and well worthy of attention. Any one with leisure to devote to this department of botany, who would undertake a systematic description of the Malta sea-weeds, would make a valuable addition to the botany of the islands.

Passing on to the land plants, our best plan will, I think, be to take some of them in review according to their seasons.

Beginning, then, with January, the botanist will, even at this early period, find employment. The blue anemone, *A. coronaria* (L.), decks the fields in abundance; *Ranunculus ficaria* (L.) and *Ranunculus bullatus* (L.) flower, the latter along the roadsides and on wastes, exhaling a strong perfume of violets; *Fumaria capreolata* (L.) and *F. officinalis* (L.) are common; *F. Vaillantii* (Lois.), a delicate species, frequent, and *F. Peterii* rare; *Lobularia maritima* (Desv.), everywhere; *Reseda alba* (L.), walls and dry places; *Cerastium campanulatum* (Viv.); *Lepigonum marinum* (Wahl.), moist places by the sea; *Hypericum Ægyptiacum* (L.), o. —I found it at Benhisa, and in Gozo, near the General's Rock; Delicata mentions it in several other places; *Geranium molle* (L.), v.c.; *Erodium cicutarium* (L'Her.), c.; *E. moschatum* (L'Her.), c.; *E. malacoides* (Willd.), v.c.; *Pistacia lentiscus* (L.), rocks at San Martin; *Galium saccharatum* (All.) v.c.; *Fedia cornuccpiæ* (Vahl.), v.c.; *Conyza saxatilis* (L.), rocks and walls, c.; *Anthemis incrassata* (Lois.), near sea; *Thrincia tuberosa* (DC.), v.c.; *Urospermum picroides* (Desf.), c.; *Picridium vulgare* (Desf.), c.; *Sonchus tenerrimus*, v.c.

The Malta heath, *Erica pedunculàris* (Pres.), grows in some of the rocky valleys, as Wied Aomor, Wied Encita, &c.; *Hyoscyamus albus* (L.), *Mammazeiza* (Malt.), flowers at all seasons; *Borago officinalis* (L.), c.; *Rosmarinus officinalis* (L.), o.; *Lamium amplexicaule* (L.), c.; *Ajuga reptans* (L.), o.; *Rumex bucephalophorus* (L.), v.c.; *Euphorbia pinea* (L.) flourishes all the year round, v.c.; *E. terracina* (L.), Melleha Bay; *Mercurialis annua* (L.), all the winter; *Thelegonum cynocrambe* (L.), c.; *Urtica urens* (L.), *U. neglecta* (Guss.), *U. membranacea* (Poir.), v.c.; *U. pilulifera* (Zerapha), v.c.

Cynomorium coccineum (L.), *Ærk el generàl* (Malt.), the curious so-called Malta fungus, which grows abundantly on the General's Rock, off

Gozo, and was formerly so valued for its medicinal properties, that a guard was set on the rock for its preservation. I have found it also at Cagliari, in Sardinia, and Wood mentions the island of Ronciglio, off Trapani, Sicily, and Lampedusa as other localities. It belongs to the family *Balanophoreæ*, which contains but one genus and one species in Europe.

Arisarum vulgare (Spr.), v.c.; *Narcissus tazetta* (L.), v.c. in open fields.

Asphodelus ramosus (L.), v.c. in valleys and rocky places.

In February we have a large accession to the number of species in flower. Space forbids an enumeration of the whole of them; nor is this necessary, as a complete catalogue, with localities and times of flowering, will be found in Dr. Delicata's "Flora Melitensis."

To mention some of the more conspicuous of the early vernal plants, we find the pheasant's eye, *Adonis Cupaniana* (Guss.), with its yellow variety, *citrina*, c. in the corn-fields and grassy places; *Papaver setigerum* (DC.), a small, dark claret-coloured poppy; and a curiously-formed, small, yellow flower of the poppy family, *Hypecoum procumbens*, in sandy fields near the sea, as at Sliema.

Silene vespertina (Retz.), v.c., two or three species of mallow and geranium.

Oxalis cernua (L.), a beautiful but troublesome weed, introduced from the Cape of Good Hope, says Dr. Gulia, in 1811; *Lotus edulis* (L.), v.c.; *L. cytisoides* (L.), at Corradino; *Psoralea bituminosa* (L.), c., a beautiful purple blue flower of the family *Leguminosæ; Scorpiurus subvillosa* (L.), wild, and cultivated as forage; *Hippocrepis*, horse-shoe vetch, two species; *Vicia*, three species; *Rhamnus oleoides* (L.), o., Wied Balluta, Wied Encita; *Tordylium apulum*, v.c.; *Chrysanthemum coronarium* (L.), v.c.; *Plantago Psyllium* (L.), v.c.; *Cynoglossum pictum* (Ait.), f.; *Echium*, three species; *Salvia verbenaca* (L.), c.; *Antirrhinum majus* (L.), on walls; *A. siculum* (Uer), *Linaria triphylla* (Desf.), f.; *Trichonema bulbocodium* (Ker.), v.c. in open wastes, a beautiful little plant of the *Iris* family, with threadlike, twisting leaves.

In March a still greater addition takes place. The soil now becomes thoroughly warmed after the February rains, and vegetation receives an impulse which advances rapidly till the end of the month. Then, and during the month of April, the vegetative powers have reached their climax; after this, as the rays of the sun gain intensity, comparatively few species can withstand the scorching to which the bare and sunny island is subjected, and dryness and aridity become the chief features of the landscape.

Taking March and April, then, together, the student will find full and constant occupation in visiting the localities where many of the rarer plants are alone met with; and, if possible, a visit should be paid to Gozo at this season, and a gun should accompany the collector, with a trusty pointer, which will procure him a variety of interest in the dewy morns, before the sun has driven all but "dogs and Englishmen" into the shade.

Several species of *Ranunculus* now flower. At Wardia, *R. ophio-*

glossifolius (Vill.), and of *Papaver*, six species, including the opium poppy, *P. somniferum* (L.); of *Cruciferæ*, many species; *Mathiola incana* (Brown), *M. tricuspidata* (Brown), Marsascirocco, and *M. sinuata* (Brown), o. In April the caper, *Capparis rupestris* (L.), begins to bud, and soon afterwards the magnificent flowers expand, which continue through the summer; its buds are used in vinegar as the well-known condiment. *Frankenia*, two species; of *Silenecæ* and *Alsinecæ*, several species; *Paronychiæ*, four species; *Malvaceæ*, several species; *Hypericineæ* and *Geraniaceæ*, several species; *Pistacia lentiscus* (L.), the terebinth, on rocks at San Martin.

The large family of the *Leguminosæ* bloom principally in this month, and form the greater part of the wild herbage of the islands, covering banks and rocks, and thrusting themselves into every crevice where a particle of soil can find a lodgment. Many species adhere to sea cliffs, others affect the sands, but the majority abound in shady and grassy places, and afford a valuable pasturage to the goats and sheep.

The various genera are recognisable by their seed-pods, which assume many eccentric forms. In *Medicago* the pods as they enlarge become spirally twisted till rolled into globes, cylinders, or wafers, sometimes smooth, but usually armed with soft spines. In *Hippocrepis* they are notched, as if stamped out with a miniature horse-shoe. In *Tetragonolobus* they are squared, with prominent wings at the angles. In *Melilotus* they are very small, orbicular, and striate; in *Scorpiurus*, like a scorpion's tail. Many other forms occur. One species only of wild rose is found in Malta, the *Rosa pumila* (L.), at Ghain el Qbira. *Cratægus Azarolus* (L.), the *Ghanzalór*, is frequent in sunny valleys: the fruit delicious when preserved. *Mesembryanthemum crystallinum* (L.), the ice-plant, grows in some fields near the sea; I have found it near the bridge at Fort Manoel. *Ecballion elaterium* (Rich.), the squirting cucumber, f. in wastes near the sea, at St. Julian's and other localities.

Of the *Umbelliferæ* we find thirty-one species, all flowering in the spring, except *Crithmum maritimum* (L.), which blooms from May to October.

Lonicera implexa (Ait.), *Caprifolium* (Zerafa), is found at Maddeleina and Wied Babu, o.

In the *Compositæ* are some interesting plants of the genera *Conyza*, *Inula*, *Evax*, *Orsinia*, *Buphthalmum*, *Cineraria*, *Calendula*, and many others. The *Centaurea spathulata* (Zerafa) is found only in Wied Babu and Wied Mokbel, on the south of the island, near Zurrico; a curious plant, with leaves very like those of a *Sempervivum*. It does not begin to flower till May. The *Boragineæ* and *Labiatæ* are well represented in Malta. To the latter family belong several aromatic plants, on which the bees feed, and which impart a spicy flavour to the honey, which is quite equal to that of Mount Hymettus. In the family *Scrophulaceæ* are several snap-dragons and other ornamental plants, which cover the walls and fortifications. *Linaria reflexa* (Desf.) and *L. Chalepensis* (Mill.) may be found at Wardia in April, r. Delicata mentions seven species of broom rape, *Orobanche*, of which *O. major* (Zerafa) is the most common, and a most destructive parasite on beans, from whose roots it grows to a height of

two feet or more. In the family *Chenopodeæ* we have *Beta maritima* (L.), sea beet, *Salicornia herbacea* (L.), and another species of glasswort; *Salsola soda* (L.), burnt for its ash, which contains a large amount of the alkali, and many others, chiefly summer plants. Of *Euphorbia* sixteen species, all poisonous, with an acrid, milky juice, but handsome plants, and well adapted, on account of their brilliant yellow and umber colouring, to form foregrounds in a sketch.

We must not omit to mention the Orchids. Of this beautiful tribe Malta boasts of fifteen species, some common, others rare, growing for the most part in grassy places. The glacis at Fort Manoel affords *Ophrys fusca* (Lerih.) in March and April, and *Anacamptis pyramidalis* (Rich.), *O. Teuthredinifera* (Willd.), saw-fly orchis, grows at Wied Babu in early spring. Wied Babu, on the south side of the island, near Wied Mokbel, should be visited for other species of Orchis, and for many other rare plants. It is one of the best localities for the botanist in Malta. Two or three species of *Gladiolus* now blossom in the corn-fields, and *Iris Sisyrinchium* (L.), covers some of the maritime wastes in profusion. Various species of wild garlic, squill, and Star of Bethlehem bloom in the spring and summer months; the medicinal squill, *Urginia Scilla* (Steinh.), abounds, especially near the sea, its large bulbous roots, and broad, glossy green leaves being very conspicuous. Of sedges seventeen species are found, and of grasses seventy-seven, many of the latter of great beauty, especially the *Briza maxima* (L.), great quaking grass, which is very common in Wied Balluta, at St. Julian's, and in other rocky and sunny spots. As a useful work in studying the Malta flora, I would recommend Wood's "Tourist's Flora," published by Reeve, Henrietta Street, Covent Garden. In this the majority of the plants in these islands will be found described briefly. Gussone's "Floræ Siculæ Synopsis," published in Naples, is most useful.

Dr. Gulia has given much information on the cultivated economical and medicinal plants in his "Repertorio Botanico," and also in his "Repertorio di Storia Naturale." It is to be hoped he will some day add to his already extended labours a systematic work on Malta botany, with descriptions of all the species.

NATURAL HISTORY.

Passing on now to the lower animal forms, Malta possesses a very fair proportion, and I feel sure that observers only are wanted to bring to light numbers of species which have never before been described—perhaps never seen, but by those who returned them to the sea, as the refuse of a net or a fish-pot. Several kinds of sponge grow in the harbours and in deep water, and after a *gregale* they may be seen washed up amongst weed, with many other marine treasures.

Zoophytes of many species are easily found in the rock-pools and growing on the quays of the harbours. Of these *Anthea cereus* is by far the most common, with its long and finely-coloured tentaculæ, which are not contractile within the mantle of the animal, as in the true anemones (*Actinidæ*).

The scarlet variety of *Actinia mesembryanthemum* is not uncommon round the rocks in sheltered pools, and other species occur which I have not identified. *Sertularia*, *Flustra*, *Gorgonia*, *Celepora*, *Lepralia*, *Caryophyllia*, with many other genera, are represented.

Of tube worms and other annelids I have met but with few species, and these of no remarkable beauty, with the exception of the *Sabella*, which may frequently be seen on a calm day in the Quarantine Harbour, with its double spiral of tentaculæ projecting from its leathery tube of eight or ten inches in length. They live well in an aquarium.

As I know of no published list of the Crustacea of Malta, I will here give the species found by myself. My authority in nomenclature was Milne Edwards' "Histoire des Crustacés;" but some species were found not described by him, which I have named provisionally.

Stenorynchus longirostris (M. Ed.), c. Length, about one inch.
Inachus thoracicus (M. Ed.), f. Length, two inches.
Pisa hirticornis (Herbst.), r. Length, one inch.
Pisa tetraodon, v.c.
Maia verrucosa (M. Ed.). A specimen brought from Marsascirocco, Dec. 1858.
Maia squinado, f. in deep water.
Herbstia condyliata (M. Ed.), r. From Marsascirocco.
Acanthonyx lunula (M. Ed.), f. amongst mud and corallines near the water's edge.
Eurynome aspera, r. One in a rock-pool opposite Piazza Sliema, Jan. 1866.
Xantho rivulosus (M. Ed.), v.c. *Grotlu* (Maltese).
Pilumnus spinifer (M. Ed.), r.
Pirimela denticulata, r.
Eriphia spinifrons, f. round the coasts.
Carcinus menas (Leach), v.c.
Portunus arcuatus, v.c.
Portunus (?) A species nearly allied to *P. depurator*.
Portunus corrugatus, c. A large handsome species.
Grapsus varius, v.c. on the rocks, and in pools all round the coasts.
Calappa cristata (M. Ed.), o.
Ilia rugosula (M. Ed.), r. In the harbours.
Dromia vulgaris, o. From deep water.
Pagurus callidus (M. Ed.). Length, six inches; from deep water.
Pagurus misanthropus (M. Ed.), v.c. Beautifully coloured; length, three quarters of an inch.
Pagurus (?), v.r. Nearly allied to *misanthropus*, but differently marked, and with longer rostrum and shorter inner antennæ.
Pagurus maculatus (M. Ed.). A small species.
Pagurus purpureus (mihi), o. In Quarantine Harbour; length, two inches.
Pagurus lacteus (mihi). A small milk-white species, dredged in Sliema Creek in December, 1858.
Scillarus arctus (M. Ed.), r. From Marsascirocco.
Astacus (?), sp.
Hippolite viridis (M. Ed.), sp., c at Marsascala, o. at Quarantine Harbour.
Hippolite maculatus (mihi). I dredged two specimens in spawn in November, and one in December, 1858. I have figured and described them.

Palæmon treillanus (M. Ed.). The common prawn of the islands. *Gamblu* (Maltese).

Palæmon gracile (mihi). A small elegant species, dredged on January 1, 1858, in the muddy part of the Quarantine Harbour, figured and described.

Alphæus ruber (?), o. in deep water.

Squilla mantis, f. Sold in the markets as food.

Caprella phasma, o. in Quarantine Harbour; length half an inch.

Sphæroma serratum, v.c. under stones on the shore.

Branchipus stagnalis (Cuv.), r. Tanks and fresh water.

Cypris Pubena. A very curious crustacean, with horny bivalve shell like a mollusc; inhabits fresh stagnant pools which are dry in the summer. I have found it on Fort Manoel.

Many of the crustaceans may be taken with a common dip or landing-net from the rocks and quays by drawing it through the seaweed; others, by dredging the beds of Zostera in the bays and harbours. Marsascala and parts of Marsascirocco are good localities. Others can only be taken in the large fish and lobster baskets, called *nasse*, which are laid down in deep water by the fishermen.

In the class *Insecta* all the orders are represented, and in some of them is found a large number of species. We can only take a glance at the principal ones.

Homiptera. The plant bugs are of this order: many species are found on the leaves and flowers of different plants. They may be known by the usually brightly-painted colouring and angularly-sculptured form of their wing-cases.

Orthoptera. The locusts, crickets, and grasshoppers, largely represented in Malta during the dry spring and summer months. The destructive migratory locust (*Œdipoda migratoria*) occasionally visits these islands, and in such numbers as to give rise to just cause for fear that the crops would be devoured. In April, 1864, if I mistake not, there was such a flight; but happily, though they rested in considerable numbers on the ground and on the trees, the main army of them passed on to the westward, and occasioned no loss.

Dictyoptera, containing the cockroaches and allied forms.

Neuroptera. The dragon-flies and some others, of which but few species are met with in Malta.

Diptera. Here, as in all temperate and warm countries, numerous, some of them swarming, so as to become almost plagues.

Lepidoptera—butterflies and moths. Tolerably abundant, and would repay a systematic elaboration of their genera and species. Some of the *Sphingidæ*, hawk-moths, are of great beauty.

Hymenoptera—bees, wasps, and their allies. Many kinds of wild bee occur in the spring and summer: masons, carpenters, dumbledores and others, and also a few species of wasp. The common wasp of the islands builds its nest of a few cells on a stalk, which are very frequent on stone walls and in crevices of rocks.

Coleoptera of many interesting varieties, and occurring at all seasons.

Some curious animals of the class *Myriapoda* abound in Malta, and one or two species, known as centipedes, of the family *Scolopendridæ*

infest houses. Of the other family of this class, the *Julidæ*, *Julus terrestris*, and, perhaps, some other species, are found under stones in shady places. They are usually curled up like an ammonite, and have a polished snaky-looking skin. The scorpion, *Scorpio*, must not be overlooked. It grows, however, only to a length of from one to two inches, and I have never heard of any harm being inflicted by its sting. It is common in valleys under stones.

But we pass now to a more interesting class of animals, the *Mollusca*, and here a great field opens itself.

To any one who has been in the habit of collecting only on the coasts of tidal seas, the uniform aspect worn by those shores which experience no alteration of sea-level is sufficiently striking after a few hours' acquaintance. There are, perhaps, no spots where an absolute identity of level prevails throughout the year; for, as in Malta, though there are no perceptible diurnal tides, still some variation in the height of the water occurs from time to time at irregular intervals. It is not uncommon for the water to stand below its usual level, to the extent of a foot or more, for many days, or even weeks; but this fluctuation causes so insignificant a change in the features of the shore as to pass often unnoticed.

To the naturalist intent upon the investigation of marine life this peculiarity may seem, at first sight, a drawback. In vain he looks for periodic recession of the waters to lay bare new fields for his explorations. It soon becomes apparent, however, that he is no loser by the stationary habits of the waters, for a brief search will suffice to show that many animals and plants, which in a tidal sea would be procurable only at or below low-water mark, are here close at hand, merely submerged beneath the surface of the usual water-line, and may be secured by a dip-net with a handle of a few feet in length, aided by a chisel and a hammer for Actiniæ, Serpulæ, &c.

In the catalogue of the collection of the late Signor G. Mamo, published by Dr. A. A. Caruana in 1867, 438 species of Mollusca are recorded as having been obtained in the Maltese islands and adjacent seas—viz., of *Acephala*, or bivalves, 145; *Tunicata*, 6; *Brachiopoda*, 9; *Pteropoda*, 8; *Gasteropoda*, 259 (of which 42 inhabit land or fresh water); *Cephalopoda*, 9; *Heteropoda*, 1. This is indeed a large list for an area so limited, and it would require many years of continuous labour to amass such a collection. As my object in the present little sketch is more to point out to the visitor or casual student, unacquainted with the Malta group, the more prominent points connected with its natural history, than to attempt to afford any information to the native or the resident, I shall merely indicate a few of the best localities and means of acquiring the commoner species of shells, and such as have fallen under my own observation.

Where time permits only of a hasty ramble or two, I would suggest an exploration of some of the bays into which shingle and coarse sand have been washed, as in parts of the extensive inlet of Marsascirocco, Marsascala, Rinella Bay, between Fort Ricasoli and the Naval Hospital, St. Julian's Bay, St. George's Bay, two or three shallow inlets between

Maddeleina and the Salini, and St. Paul's Bay, especially under a clay cliff which extends from the chapel near the fort towards the eastern point of the bay. Where weed has accumulated, as it frequently does, it will scarcely repay a search; but where the shingle and sand are clean a line or two of *débris* will be noted, along which, in a short time, a good number of the characteristic shells of the island may be obtained. To the young collector I may remark that it is seldom of much use to dig into the sand for shells, as, being so much lighter than the stones with which they are mixed up, they remain almost entirely on the surface when the wave subsides which has rolled all onwards together.

At Marsascirocco and Marsascala bivalves will predominate, with some species of *Buccinum*, *Nassa*, *Cerithium*, and others. The exquisitely delicate *Solenomya Mediterranea* inhabits these bays, and is a treasure seldom to be obtained in a perfect state. *Dolium Galea* (L.), a fine species, *Cassis undulata* (L.), with one or two species of *Tritonium* and several of *Murex*, haunt the weedy bottom of Marsascirocco, with *Neritula neritea*, *Buccinum mutabile* (L.), *B. ascanias*, *B. corniculum* (Oliv.), and many other species.

At St. Julian's Bay are three or four small patches of fine shingle and shell sand, which I have found prolific of small species, chiefly of the genera *Rissoa*, *Pleurotoma*, *Trochus*, *Monodonta*, *Phasianella*, *Cerithium*, *Mitra*, *Marginella*, *Columbella*, *Eulima*, *Chemnitzia*, *Natica*, *Emarginula*, and *Fissurella*. The beautiful little *Fossarus Adansoni* (Phill.) has occurred on one or two occasions, as also *Ringicula auriculata* (Menard). Fifteen years ago a small patch on the west side of the bay, just where the old line of fortification with its fosse abuts on the shore, was a sure find for a great variety of species, especially after a *gregale*, or heavy sea from the eastward. Of late years, owing to the removal of shingle and sand for mortar, it has deteriorated, but is still worth a visit.

Half a mile west of St. Julian's we reach St. George's, a celebrated spot for the handsome *Tellina planata* (L.), and *T. balaustina* (L.) I have found here and at St. Julian's. It is also a good locality for several species of *Pleurotoma*, of which genus Malta boasts fourteen species. Between St. Julian's and St. George's are some shingly coves to the east of Dragonara Point well worth visiting. Here I have frequently met with a dozen good specimens of *Monodonta corallina* (L.) of an afternoon. *Cypræa lurida* (L.) and *Cypræa spurca* (L.), two beautifully-polished species of from one to two inches in length, occur now and then. *Cypræa pyrum* (L.) is very scarce, though not uncommon near Naples. All the shingle and sandy beds at Maddeleina, and to the westward as far as Melleha, are chiefly of the same character as those of St. Julian's, but many of them are much more extensive; and on beaches under banks of the blue clay, sharks' teeth and other fossils may be found washed out of the cliffs, as well as shells. The rocks and pools in them will also afford several species, especially of *Patella*, *Chiton*, *Serpula*, *Trochus*, and *Littorina neritoides* (L.), whilst during a gale of wind many deep-sea shells are frequently thrown up.

Such are the chief conchological attractions of a shore walk: with a

boat and a dredge, and especially with a kind of forceps placed either on a long pole or adjusted so as to open and shut with lines, much more may be effected.

Five species of *Pinna* are found in Malta, some of them common in the harbours within reach of a pole or boat-hook. They project from the mud amongst the Zostera roots, to which they are attached by their silky cable. Of this silk, which is of fine texture, but heavy, I have seen gloves made.

Several beautiful species of *Cardium* and *Pecten* may be dredged or obtained from the Maltese divers who fish for the *Gandoflé* (*Venus verrucosa*, L.), *Arzelle* (*Venus aurea*, Mat., and *V. decussata*, L.), and other marketable shell-fish. Many others, again, may be brought to light by a dexterous fishing with the grapnel for large stones. These, when hauled into the boat, give a harvest of spoils: *Pholas*, *Lithodomus*, *Gastrochœna*, and the curious and exquisite *Clavagella*, with its milk-white tube and flower-like expansion projecting beyond the surface of the rock. The last is a rarity, I believe, in all collections: four species are recorded. Space forbids me to speak of many other interesting species common in these waters. I must mention, however, *Aplysia depilans* (L.), *Serduk el Bahar* (Maltese), a gigantic naked mollusc of a dark claret colour, with an internal shell, often to be seen waving the wing-like edges of its mantle on a seaweed near the margin of the quays; and its smaller cousin, *A. punctata* (Cuv.), is also frequent.

Five species of *Doris*, one of *Thetys*, one of *Procnonotus*, and three of *Æolis* are enumerated in Dr. Caruana's catalogue, and I believe I may add one species of *Lophocercus* found by me in the Quarantine Harbour in December, 1857, of which I have drawn a figure. It appears to coincide with the *L. Sieboldii* (Adam's genera).

Of the *Brachiopoda*, *Terebratula vitrea* (L.), and *T. caput serpentis* (L.), with five species of *Orthis*, have been taken in deep water off the islands. Eight species of *Pteropoda* of the genera *Hyalœa*, *Clevodora*, and *Odontidium*, are enumerated in Signor Mamo's list.

In the order *Pulmonifera*, which includes the land and fresh-water univalves, we find in Malta the following genera:—

Limax, the slugs, *Bugharuien*, (Maltese, father of naked ones), three species.

Helix, the true snails, *Bebbux ta l'art* (Maltese), nineteen species.

Bulimus, three species, all very common.

Pupa, two species, one very rare indeed, the other local.

Achatina, two species, of which *A. folliculus* (Gm.) is common in some places.

Clausilia, four species:—*C. macrostoma* (Cantraine) and *C. pappillaris* (Mull.) are very common; *C. scalaris* (Mamo) was found near Selmone Castle, at St. Paul's Bay, by Captain Spratt, R. N., and *C. mamotica* (Mamo) at Gozo, by Signor Mamo.

Auricula, two or three species, of which *A. myosotis* (Drap.) is common in damp, saline places under stones, as by the side of the Quarantine Harbour, in a patch of waste between Fort Manoel bridge and Sliema.

Cyclostoma, two species, the larger one, *C. Melitense* (Sowerby), v.c.; perhaps identical with *C. elegans*, the common European species.

In the fresh-water division we have:—

Planorbis marginatus, which Signor Mamo mentions as inhabiting a reservoir in Florian Gardens, who enumerates also—

Lymnæus, two species; *Physa*, one species; *Paludina*, two species.

The land shells may be found distributed all over the islands, many of them in great numbers. Moist places in valleys and under stones are productive of several species. *Helix Melitensis* (Fer., the *H. globularis* of Zeigler) should be sought for on the stems and branches of trees near houses and on walls. Sliema and St. Julian's are good localities.

H. gaulitana (Mamo) is only found in parts of Gozo, and this island is, I believe, the only known locality for it. Any one forming a collection of Malta shells should visit the collection in the Public Library, where he will be able to compare and name the great majority of the specimens he meets with in his rambles.

We come now to a consideration of the fish inhabiting the Maltese waters. The researches of some years, aided by the catalogue of Gaetano Trapani, published in 1838, and still more by the more recent and carefully-elaborated monograph of my friend, Dr. Gulia, to whose oral information and ever-ready help, as well as to his writings, I am greatly indebted, have enabled me to give, I trust, a reliable synopsis of the genera and number of species of the finny tribe which have been observed in the Malta harbours, bays, and adjacent seas. For more complete information, Dr. Gulia's work, the "Pesce di Malta," procurable at the Malta libraries, should be consulted, together with the works of Cuvier, Risso, Bonaparte, and other writers on ichthyology. Dr. Gulia enumerates 186 species, belonging to 108 genera.

Following the course which I have proposed, I shall seek merely to offer an ichthyological sketch, to be filled in according to the opportunities and enthusiasm of the student.

Comparing the Mediterranean fish with those of the North Atlantic, the conclusion at once strikes us that in the inland sea we have a nearer approach to tropical colouring than in corresponding latitudes in the ocean, whilst in the ocean there is a preponderance of those species which are mostly esteemed for the market and table, notwithstanding that the Mediterranean abounds with a few species that are pre-eminently useful as food, of which we may instance the sardine, the anchovy, and the tunny. But the great staple of fish supply, so abundantly consumed by the natives of the countries bordering on the Mediterranean, arrives in a salt state from the cooler waters of the North Atlantic, whilst, with the exception of the sardine and anchovy, none are exported.

The naturalist, however, will find ample occupation and a field well stocked with interesting genera. In Malta, as in most southern markets, nearly every species which falls into the toils of the fisherman finds its way to the market-stall; so that a few visits will show the collector the majority of the ordinary species in season, whilst he will not unseldom discover some rarity that would be unattainable unless with prolonged time and resources. By all means, then, the markets should be frequently

attended, and the earlier in the morning the better. Many methods are in use amongst the fishermen for supplying the markets. In deep waters the hand-line, *lenza* (Malt.), and the wicker pots, *nasse*, are the chief means for the capture of the larger species, whilst some of the mackerel, as *Coryphæna hippurus* (L.), *Lampuca* (Malt.), *Pelamys sarda* (Cuv.), *Palamit* (Malt.), and others, are taken by whipping, *i.e.*, fishing with a white feather on the surface whilst sailing briskly. In the harbours nets are adopted; the *xárpa*, or large seine, and the *tartarún*, or small seine, being the most destructive agents. The trammel, *parit*, and the casting-net, *teriha*, are also in vogue, and the long-handled fish spear, *foxna*,* is frequently used with effect on bright, calm days.

Besides the professional fishermen, hundreds of amateurs delight in angling with a rod from the rocks, and at times their success amounts to what may fairly be termed sport. The best time for the rod is after a *gregale*, when, perchance, a serene morning may have succeeded the late turbulent state of the atmosphere. A heavy ground-swell is still thundering into the caverns and tearing its broken way along the ledges: at such seasons many an ardent angler may be seen plying his art, perched on some rocky point or elevation just out of reach of the fierce waters, and casting his hook into the very surf, so near to the jagged sides of the rocks that one unaccustomed to the habits of some of the finny tribes would imagine his chance of catching anything zoological to be a very poor one. Numbers of fine bream are, however, taken in this way, chiefly the *Sargu* (*Sargus Rondoletii*, Cuv.) and the *Xirghieu* (*Sargus Salviani*, Cuv.), whilst many other species are taken by the hook in calmer weather.

Of the sea-bream seventeen species are taken on these coasts; amongst them are some of the most esteemed fish for the table, especially the gilt-head, *Chrysophrys aurata* (Cuv.), the dentice, *Dentex vulgaris* (Cuv.), and the pagell, *Pagellus erythrinus* (Cuv.). The rod-angler frequently half fills his basket with many species of the wrasse, *Labridæ*. These are for the most part haunters of rocks, and on a fine day they may be watched from a boat slowly circling round the waving seaweed, their vivid colouring and elegant motions giving life and beauty to the submarine picture. Most of the smaller species do well in an aquarium, and in studying this interesting and difficult order this is almost indispensable. Some of the wrasse, as the exquisite rainbow wrasse, *Julis Mediterranea* (Riss.) and *J. Giofredi* (Riss.) live on sandy and weedy bottoms, and will not suit an aquarium, as they are so shy that they kill themselves, apparently by fright. I have, however, succeeded in keeping some very young ones for some weeks. Many of the wrasse are good for food, and delicate. To Dr. Gulia belongs the credit of elaborating the Malta species of this perplexing group, and also of adding eight undescribed species to the list.

The herring family, *Clupeidæ*, furnishes many of the most valuable fishes in these seas. Large shoals of sardines may often be seen flashing

* In writing Maltese *x* is pronounced as *sh*.

their silvery sides above the surface of the harbours, like a cat's-paw of wind rippling the glassy calm. They, with others of the tribe, fall victims to the fatal embraces of the seine net.

In the *Scomberesocidæ* we have the flying fish, an unfrequent visitor, but which occasionally falls on the deck of vessels in this as in other parts of the Mediterranean. The species is *Exocætus exiliens* (Bloch.).

The needle fish, *Belone acus* (Risso), and sea pike, *Sphyræna spet* (Lacep), are also common and esteemed.

The *Gadideæ*, cod family, are not largely represented, but we find four, if not five, species on the coasts. (*Vide* Gulia, "Pesce di Malta," p. 19.)

The flat fish, *Pleuronectidæ*, are also rare. *Rhombus lævis* (Bond), *Barbùn* (Maltese), is the commonest species here.

In the *Percideæ* are several important species. *Cernus gigas* (Bonap.), which grows to a very large size, as does *Polyprion cernium* (Val.) —these are deep-sea fish; whilst *Labrax lupus* (Cuv.), *Serranus scriba* (Cuv.), *S. cabrilla* (Cuv.), and *S. hepatus* (Cuv.), are taken near shore.

Grey mullet of several species are frequent in the harbours, and are preserved in lagoons at Marsascirocco and other places. Dr. Gulia enumerates six.

In the *Triglidiæ* we have eleven species, including the beautiful flying gurnard, *Dactylopterus volitans* (Lacep), whose colours, seen in the bright sunshine, rival those of the famed angel fish of the West Indies and Bermudas.

The *Scombriedæ*, mackerel, furnish eighteen species to our lists. They are all migratory, and chiefly approach the shores in the spring and summer months. The only way of making the acquaintance of the majority is by attending the markets, or engaging some intelligent fisherman to procure them. The silver hook will be most successful.

Numbers of other species, and of families of which my limits will not permit me to speak, will reward even the most casual search.

In the mild and usually serene winter climate of Malta, the visitor, or even the invalid, may pass many a pleasant hour on the water, and may with great facility pursue any of the various studies connected with marine life which I have sketched in this short paper.

It remains now only to take a brief survey of the higher orders of Vertebrata included in the Malta fauna. Lizards of four species inhabit the islands, with two or three species of snake. None of the latter are venomous, as one undoubtedly was in the days of St. Paul. *Callopeltis leopardinus* (Fitz.) and *Coluber viridiflavus*, var. *carbonarius* (Bonap.), are those named as Maltese by Dr. Gulia, who gives the following lacertian reptiles:—*Ascalabotes Mauritanicus* (Bonap.); *Hemidactylus triedrus* (Cuv.), *Uizgha* (Malt.), a small, ugly lizard infesting houses; *Podarcis muralis* (Wag.), the common wall lizard, *Gremxula* (Malt.), which assumes various colours; and *Gongylus ocellatus* (Wag.), *Xahmet l'ard* (Malt.), which, as its Maltese name (fat of the earth) implies, is a smooth, slippery, fat reptile, with a skin like a snake's, and very short legs. It grows to eight or ten inches; habitation, under large stones. A turtle, *Thalassochelys caretta*

(Bonap.), is found off the islands, and a frog, *Discoglossus pictus* (Grav.), inhabits the fountains and moist places in valleys.

Of the birds I might speak at great length did my space permit, but a rapid survey of the Malta ornithology is all I can attempt.

Of indigenous species there are very few indeed. The jackdaw, *Corvus monedula* (L.); the blue solitary thrush, *Petrocyncla cyanea;* the spectacled warbler, *Sylvia conspicillata;* the robin, *Erythaca rubecula;* kestrel, *Falco tinnunculus;* and perhaps the herring gull, *Larus argentatus*, comprise all. In the spring, however, the islands are visited by numerous migratory species, and a collection which should extend over a course of some years would be found to include very many of the European and North African migrants. Following the most recent enumeration of Malta birds, and one on which great care and long time have been expended, that by my friend, Mr. C. A. Wright, published in the *Ibis* for January, 1864, we find the following numbers:—*Raptores*, 28; *Insessores Dentirostres*, 57; *Insessores Conirostres*, 33; *Insessores Scansores*, 4; *Insessores Fissirostres*, 13; *Rasores*, 9; *Grallatores*, 64; *Natatores*, 47. As I have said, nearly all of these are migratory, and are only to be met with in spring and autumn, or, in the case of some of the marine birds, in winter.

Of the migratory birds but few are found in any considerable numbers throughout the period of flight. If we except the quail and the turtle-dove, with some species of swallow, of warblers, of larks, and of pipits, we shall find that of the rest there will be a deficiency either in the numbers of any individual species, or else in the number of days on which a species appears; so that any one desirous of making the most of a sojourn in Malta for adding to his collections must work constantly and diligently from about the middle of March till the end of April, during which time he may feel assured that numbers of interesting species, with some that are rarities to the European ornithologist, will fall to his share.

In order to take advantage of the migratory season, it is desirable to study the winds and weather, which have the chief influence in determining the flight and resting-places of birds, some species arriving during one state of wind, and some during another. I can only attempt to give a general indication of those rules which experience has proved to hold good. In the spring, the occurrence of a north-westerly or westerly wind is found most favourable for bringing the quails and a number of other species whose powers of flight are not remarkable. The force of the wind must also be taken into account. With the wind—say—at north-west, a very usual case, and blowing gently, if it come on to increase, and especially to blow hard, a great accession to the arrivals may be certainly predicted if it occurs during the height of the season, which is usually during the two middle weeks of April. Before or after this time is less certainty. Many of the stronger fliers never alight at all, unless compelled to seek a temporary rest or shelter from some adverse breeze which they have a difficulty in stemming. Most birds appear to fly across the seas during the night, and so are unobserved. Some fly at a great height and elude detection, except by a practised eye. Again, of those that do find a rest for the sole of their foot on

the rocks and bushes of the island, many remain but a single day or night, so that from these various causes Malta fails to convey any impression of its being in any sense an ornithological paradise. Yet, with all these detracting influences, a day occurs now and then on which neither could the sportsman desire better sport, nor the collector a greater variety in his bag.

Such a day, I remember, occurred on the 17th April, 1854, when, having taken my station on the shores of Fort Manoel Island, near the bridge, I was fully occupied the whole day in observing and securing specimens of the flocks of sandpipers, herons, and other waders, which descended every few minutes, seeking refuge from the force of a stiff easterly breeze.

On that day I observed nearly every species of wader known to visit the islands, with the exception of cranes and storks. The oyster-catcher, *Hæmatopus ostralegus*, was amongst the number; and the glossy ibis (*Ibis falcinellus*), stilt plover (*Himantopus melanopterus*), besides many other treasures, found their way into my bag.

It was to the force rather than to the direction of the wind that the unusual congregation of birds on this day was to be attributed. An easterly gale, equally with a westerly one, would put a check on the progress of migration; but westerly winds are far more prevalent at this season, and their effect, owing to their comparative frequency, more observable.

Another good post for the wading and water birds is at the Marsa, at the head of the Great Harbour, but since the extension of the port in that direction the area for sport has been much circumscribed.

The Salini, or salt-pans, on the east of St. Paul's Bay, may be frequently worth a visit for ducks and waders, and at several points of the more unfrequented parts of the shores, as at Marfa, Selmone, and Melleha, herons and other shy birds may be picked up. But perhaps the most pleasing ornithological pictures, and those most characteristic of the avi-fauna of southern climes, are to be met with in the secluded and woody valleys of the island, where the carubi tree attains its greatest bulk and spread of foliage.

I know of no more exhilarating feeling than that which one experiences in an early morning walk with a gun on the slopes and terraced fields of such a valley. Before the sun has gained more than a few degrees of elevation, and whilst the whole freshness of dewy morn still thrills every pulse with a glow which can only be felt at such times, I would invite any one who has not enjoyed the delight to a feast of nature in which many a feathered beauty would bear its part, and where he would be regaled, in all probability, with the acquaintance of some species of more than ordinary interest. In April the roller, *Coracius garrula*, may often be seen perched on some wall, keenly watchful of any approaching danger, and a long, weary chase he will generally lead the sportsman intent on making a prize of him; frequently will the knowing bird elude every artifice, till his pursuer perplexed and exhausted by the increasing power of the sun's rays and a prolonged scramble over tottering walls, beats a retreat, or

makes for some shady spot, where, if he has made a proper provision for his comfort and thorough enjoyment of the morning's sport and exercise, he will find awaiting him a small basket containing something solid and something cool. Before, however, he thus rests in contemplation of nature's beauties around him, he should have either made his bag of quail, say ten to twenty brace, as a fair morning's sport, or have collected some of the many land birds which visit the island at this season.

Prominent amongst the valley birds will be noted the golden oriole, *Oriolus galbula*, the male of which has a golden yellow body, with black wings; so brilliant a bird that at a distance a flock of them would lead one to imagine that the carubi tree had burst forth with the fruit of the orange or the golden apples of the Hesperides. Overhead may be circling a flock of bee-eaters, *Merops apiaster*. Their curious guttural, querulous note will soon lead to their discovery, though at times they float like sunbeams in the upper air. Anon they swoop towards the earth, and perch wantonly on the upper twigs of the trees. Their whole demeanour is suggestive of life, happiness, and contentment, and in graceful harmony with the radiant flush of spring.

The large Alpine swift, *Cypselus Melba*, is occasionally found in company with its smaller dusky cousin, the common swift; and the woodchat shrike, *Lanius rufus*, frequents the valleys the whole spring. It is a fine songster, equalled only by a few of the warblers and thrushes. It breeds in the island.

In March and April many of the hawks visit Malta on their passage north, and are to be met with in all parts of the islands. The European nightjar, *Caprimulgus Europæus*, often haunts the rocky valleys in considerable numbers, but remains only for a day or two; and of warblers a very large number of species pass every year, and usually make a considerable halt before they resume their transmarine flight. The pretty little spectacled warbler, *Sylvia conspicillata*, breeds in some places, as near the old English cemetery at Floriana, placing its nest in a low bush. Larks and pipits of several species inhabit Malta in the spring. The large Calandra lark is domesticated, and sings equally with the skylark. The short-toed lark, *Alauda brachydactyla*, is very common, rejoicing in the regions of the air, whence his low, monotonous warble descends to earth. *Anthus campestris*, the tawny pipit, I have frequently observed at Fort Manoel; and on one occasion the rare *Anthus Richardi* was obtained by my friend, Mr. C. A. Wright. *Anthus cervinus*, an African species, is met with, but may often be confounded with the common *A. pratensis*, as the tawny-red throat, which is characteristic of the former, is not always attained at the time of their migration. In the winter the two species are hardly distinguishable. Amongst the many birds which the quail-shooter is likely to encounter in April are three or four species of rail. The common species, *Rallus Crex* (L.), is that most frequently met with; but the spotted, Baillon's, and the little crake are also obtainable at times. They are all so difficult to flush, that without a dog it is hopeless to search for them.

The ducks and sea birds are, for the most part, winter visitors, and uncertain in their appearance. When the winters are severe in the north, ducks, grebes, and some other sea-fowl pass to the south of the European shores in more than their usual numbers, and the bays and harbours of Malta are often haunted by them till the ever-ready fowling-piece of the energetic sportsman drives them to seek a more secluded retreat, or decides their destiny to the market-stall.

On the Mammalia of Malta I will only observe that, with the exception of the hedgehog, one or two species of weasel, the Norway rat, and the domestic mouse, I know of no other species existing wild on the island. The marine Mammalia are common to the Mediterranean, and consist of porpoises, one or two species of whale, and a seal. On the occasion of a yachting voyage round Sicily, I once noticed a whale of from twenty to thirty feet in length, of a dull white colour, which passed within a very short distance of the yacht. The species is unknown to me.

If the foregoing short and imperfect sketch lead any one making a sojourn in the island to a pursuit of any branch of its natural history, or point out a means of passing away pleasantly and profitably hours which would otherwise prove tedious, my object will have been attained.

THE END.

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